

The **CLEARING HOUSE**

A JOURNAL FOR MODERN JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

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No. 6

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Reading Improvement**

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by JOSEPH O. LORETAN

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of School with a Prayer?**

by ALLEN BERGER

Who Is a Good Teacher? . . . Characteristics of Slow Learners . . . Observations on Cheating . . . Home-Room Guidance Reborn . . . Science and Homework . . . Vocational Education in Mexico

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The Clearing House

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CH volumes are available on microfilm.

NOTICE TO WRITERS

We invite readers to write articles that report good practices, interesting experiments, research findings, or new slants on persistent problems in education. We prefer articles that combine factual reporting, interesting context, and incisive style. Topics should relate to programs, services, and personnel in junior and senior high school.

Manuscripts should not exceed 2,500 words, although we can use shorter pieces of 100 to 600 words. Write what you have to say in as few words

as possible. Eliminate trite phrases and unnecessary words that serve only to fill up space.

Typing should be double spaced. Keep the carbon copy and send us the original. To tailor articles to available space, we may have to make slight changes in the manuscript. Do not expect the return of your manuscript until members of the Editorial Board have had enough time to give it full consideration.

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WHO IS A GOOD TEACHER?

By DONALD W. ROBINSON

"I JUST CAN'T STAND THAT MR. SMITH!
He's the only teacher I don't like."

"Smith? He's my favorite. I think he's
wonderful."

These typical student evaluations might closely resemble adult reactions, including administrator's ratings. Many a teacher has failed in one school, moved on to another system, and been accepted as a superior teacher.

Paradoxically, the superior teacher can sometimes be clearly recognized, sometimes not. On a faculty of fifty teachers perhaps five or ten will be such paragons that by common consent they are recognized as strong teachers. Another five or ten might be accepted by most competent observers as being on the weak side—adequate, but with certain clearly defined deficiencies. At least thirty remain, well over half of the faculty, unclassifiable. They are not necessarily average. Almost everyone agrees that this group includes some of the strongest and some of the weakest teachers in the whole school, but almost no two agree on who is which.

The reason of course is that teaching is such a personal thing. Success hinges upon personality and personality defies objective measurement.

Strong teachers must indeed be intellectually capable, but does this mean they should be the most brilliant minds obtainable? A high school staffed with only the most brilliant minds would not likely be the best high school.

Public school teaching seldom attracts the most brilliant because the brilliant soon be-

come bored when working exclusively with small minds or young minds. And public schools today do not allow the teacher time enough to use his student contacts as stimulants to further his own creative work.

Try to imagine Rockwell Kent or Bertrand Russell, William O. Douglas or Albert Einstein, Pablo Picasso, John Dewey, or Werner von Braun teaching very long in a public school. Or a typical American community allowing them to teach very long. Unfortunately, really large minds are often too upsetting for many communities. There is a sense in which the public does demand, if not mediocrity, at least a substantial acceptance of normal, moderate views. A truly brilliant mind is rather apt to be too inquiring a mind for some parents to entrust their offspring to.

It is difficult to overemphasize the importance of emotional maturity in the teacher. At the elementary level the ability to secure emotional rapport is paramount. At the college level scholarly accomplishment counts more. In the crucial years between, the high-school teacher must be superior in both realms, the interpersonal know-how and the academic competence. Adolescents are too much children and too much adults to thrive on anything less than the dual proficiency.

For a math teacher to cope with the idiosyncrasies of a hundred and fifty different adolescents and get them to learn math up to the level of their capacities requires a great deal more of him than a knowledge of mathematics.

EDITOR'S NOTE

One of the urgent needs in education is for superior teachers. This is the kind of generalization common to writers or speakers who wish to pontificate on or view with alarm the quality of teaching in our schools. One must go beyond the generalization to consider more deeply who is a superior teacher. It is at this point that superficial comment encounters hazards.

We believe in the schoolteachers of America. With few exceptions they are dedicated people doing an extremely good job. Many of them are superior teachers. But superior in and of themselves. For there is no prototype of a superior teacher to which all must conform. Who is a superior teacher then? We suggest that you read this article to find out how the author replies to the question. He is a regular CH contributor and hails from San Francisco.

Aside from the principles of learning, the psychology, the methods, and the gimmicks he may learn in education courses—and these can be of tremendous value—and aside from the thorough knowledge of math that is so basic that we should be able to assume it as we should assume good manners, good diction, and a host of other basics, the teacher's greatest asset will be a flexible personality. The more elastic and understanding his temperament, the closer he can come to reaching and teaching all his students. The more rigid or inflexible he is, the fewer he will reach.

Simply making an adolescent study through the imposition of discipline has real value for some students at some time. As a substitute for successful motivation it is pitifully inadequate. Coercion can make students go through the motions. It can make them conform, at least for the time being. There is little assurance that it will help them learn.

Much that Gilbert Highet says with respect to punishing failure with blows ap-

plies as well to other kinds of coercion (though coercion is often justifiable as a last resort). Highet, a classicist, a scholar, and a great teacher, says in his treatise on "The Art of Teaching": "To add fear to it [learning] simply makes it more difficult. Fear does not encourage, it drives on blindly. It blocks the movement of the mind. It produces the opposite effect to that of true education, because it makes frightened pupils dull and imitative, instead of making them original and eager. . . . It has another counter-effect even more damaging: it causes hate."

The excellent teacher is usually the one who is demanding without appearing to be. He is interested, understanding, and sympathetic, but still maintains good discipline and high standards. One teacher's personality is such that he will emphasize the disciplined virtues of punctuality, precision, and thoroughness. Another will exemplify and extol the values of tolerance, open-mindedness, perspective, and freedom, at the relative neglect of the first set of values. So-called conservative values and so-called liberal values are equally valid and equally essential, but it is impossible for any one teacher to exemplify the whole range of social values.

A faculty can and should represent the entire spectrum, including teachers whose convictions range from cautious conservatives to robust rebels, whose personalities run the entire gamut from the quiet permissive to the raucous egocentric. And it seems apparent that the "good" teacher may be anywhere along the spectrum. I would assume that a thorough sampling of superior teachers would disclose that they are equally distributed among liberals and conservatives, and include in their ranks as many "progressive" teachers as "traditional." I have never known a teacher who was superior because he was permissive or because he was authoritarian.

It is important for a teacher to know where he stands with respect to educa-

tional, political, and social philosophy. Too many teachers do not. Whether this is an increasing number is impossible to say, but the number of placid classroom technicians without feeling or concern for larger issues seems large. Further, this condition is so generally accepted as the norm that a competent teacher expressing an interest in basic philosophies is apt to be asked, "What are you doing here? Why aren't you teaching in college?" The implication is that competence and alertness are considered out of place in a public high school.

The teacher must be serious and superior—but not too serious and not too superior.

The once-common parochial restrictions on the private life of the teacher, the rules about where he must live, whom he might date, what church he must attend, and prohibitions on smoking and drinking, were clear expressions of this expectation that the teacher will exemplify all that is proper and respected.

This is still true, though on a different level. Most communities still expect the teacher to be an exemplar of whatever that locality considers the ideal behavior pattern, in addition to being an excellent teacher, or even as a prerequisite for being considered an excellent teacher. A community that extols the service club type of solidarity expects the superior teacher to be a joiner and a booster as well as a good teacher. The community that accents religious life will tend to expect its good teachers to be active in church work. The teacher must always satisfy the local image of what a good teacher should be.

No single word exists to convey the meaning of superb teachership in the way that "leadership" expresses the combination of

qualities necessary for the successful figure in public life, or as "enterprise" describes it for the business leader and "command" for the military leader. "Scholarship" is too limited a word and is more appropriate for the college professor than for the high-school teacher.

Scholarship is a most laudable pursuit for any teacher, but to expect that every high-school teacher will engage in research is completely unreasonable as high schools are administered today. The good teacher has not time to do a good teaching job and keep well informed regarding the world about him, let alone attempting serious research. It is axiomatic that the effective teacher will remain an active learner. The most important trait he can impart is the love for learning, a love which can be imparted only by one who possesses it.

The superior teacher, intelligent, flexible, well educated in the subject he is to teach, eager to learn and eager to teach, and in tune with his community, should have in addition the advantages of knowing all that is known about teaching. This will spare him (and his students) the trial-and-error ordeal of learning what teachers have always found to be true. Good training in education courses can equip him with a knowledge of recent discoveries about teaching as well as those rare bits of ancient wisdom which only the most insightful learned in the past.

These qualities and many more in endless variation will be found in all those teachers rated superior.

Because we care about providing the best possible learning for all children, we cannot accept the notion that knowledge of the subject alone is enough to make a good teacher, or even almost enough.

Vocational Education in Mexico

By WALTER TRASIN

AT A FEW MINUTES before seven o'clock each morning, except Sunday, José walks with his armful of books along the street called Mediterranean Sea. In this part of Mexico City, many of the streets are named after distant bodies of water—Sea of Japan, Sea of Java, Caribbean, Coral, Yellow, Red, Baltic, Caspian, Aegean, and many other seas. José has often wondered what the world is like near these places. He, himself, has never been beyond the limits of the city. Some day, when he is an aeronautical engineer, he will build planes which will fly over all of them. José is fourteen years old and in the third and final year at Prevocational School No. 3.

A few steps farther along the street, he comes to the entrance to the old building, once a convent, which provides the classrooms, laboratories, and shops for his education. Entering the doorway, he says "good morning" to an old man who sits on a low, wooden stool all through the day, guarding the entrance. "This is a tiresome job," thinks José, "but for the old man it is all right."

EDITOR'S NOTE

The latest in our series on comparative education deals with our neighbor nation immediately to the south. It is interestingly written. We urge you to read it not because there is anything in the context that our school systems should copy. That is not the purpose of gaining knowledge of education in other lands anyway. Our main purpose in presenting this article on vocational education in Mexico is to provide a greater understanding of Mexican life and culture, of which its schools are a highly important element. The writer teaches industrial arts at Montebello, California.

Crossing the hall, José looks in at a small auditorium, which in the days of the convent was a church. Sometimes his friend, Alfonso, who arrives early, studies there before going to class. He is going to be an architectural engineer. He will design the massive steel and concrete structures that are springing up all over the city.

On seeing that Alfonso is not in the auditorium, José walks through an archway into a small courtyard where the roses still are tended as carefully as they were in former years. He climbs a stairway to the balcony which overlooks the courtyard and walks toward his classroom, idly running the fingers of his right hand along the ancient iron rail that guards the balcony's edge.

Inside the classroom, José sees again the plain white walls, unadorned by pictures or bulletin board. Two large windows filter daylight through glass bricks; small, ineffective neon tubes hang from the ceiling. At one end of the room there are a chalk board, a wooden platform worn by years of footsteps, and a small table with a chair for the teacher. Five rows of old, tablet-arm chairs, anchored to wooden rails, eight to the row, face the chalk board. José finds a place to sit and calls a greeting to Alfonso. Other students hurry into the room; it is time for class to begin. A moment later, Professor Garza enters with his familiar short, brisk strides and glances quickly around the room. All talking stops. The students rise beside their chairs. They stand silently until a nod of his head tells them to be seated. Another school day has begun.

José is one of approximately 1,600 students who are enrolled in Prevocational School No. 3, which they attend in double session. When he first came to this school more than two years ago, he brought with him a certificate which showed that he had

successfully completed the six grades of his primary education. He also brought his birth record and a letter of good conduct. He was given a test of knowledge and ability, as well as a medical examination, before being admitted to the program. On this basis, the more capable students are selected, since there are always more applicants than can be accommodated.

Within the federal district, the boundary of which corresponds roughly to that of the city itself, are five prevocational schools. These are the foundation stones of the vast National Polytechnic Institute which, in addition to prevocational schools, is composed of vocational and professional schools and offers courses for workers in industry as well. Altogether, there are twenty-two schools and nearly 30,000 pupils. These schools are free.

Each of the vocational and professional schools offers a specialized program. In all of the prevocational schools, however, the program is identical (see p. 329, col. 1). All students follow the full course of study for three years. There are no electives. The work is intensive and the instructors are demanding. It is well known that students who lack ability or seriousness of purpose do not remain long. The stark simplicity of the classroom speaks this message: "Students, you are here to learn."

A student who volunteers an answer to a question, or is called upon to recite, stands until the teacher indicates he should be seated. During the fifty-minute class period, the pupil remains in his place. There is no pencil sharpener to which he can wander, since all students are expected to provide their own sharp pencils or a pen. Similarly, there is no need for him to go to the teacher for paper; he brings all necessary supplies with him when he comes to class.

The instructors are well prepared and teach only in their area of specialization. At least one, the biology teacher, also holds the degree of doctor of medicine. In the biology

laboratory the teacher has two professional assistants, who are specialists in bacteriology and chemistry. Assistants also aid the instructors in the physics and chemistry laboratories, which are adequately, though not elaborately, equipped. Although classes are large (forty pupils), all students are able to participate in experiments relative to their studies.

The development of skill in the use of the hands is considered to be important for all Mexican boys and girls. (A relatively small number of girls are enrolled in the prevocational program.) Shop courses are conducted with this purpose in mind. Consequently, there are few machine tools in the shops of the prevocational school, with the exception of those used by the instructor in the preparation of materials. In the woodshop, chips fly furiously as forty youngsters slide their planes over the pine boards which they are fashioning into footstools, coat racks, small tables, and other projects. The instructor is busy checking square edges, true surfaces, accurate measurements. In sheet-metal work, the operations of measuring, cutting, forming, folding seams, and fastening provide further opportunity to develop hand skills. Co-ordination of hand and eye is emphasized also in the modeling shop, where students, using broken hack-saw blades, cut and scrape small blocks of plaster into accurate models of geometric figures. With a saw, file, drill, tap, and a few pieces of steel, the student constructs a monkey wrench in the metal shop. There is no charge for materials used and the completed project becomes the property of the student.

Each month, intensive examinations are given in all subjects, with emphasis being placed on knowledge of specific details. Every three months, the student takes a comprehensive examination on the material studied in that period.

Students and instructors agree that serious problems of discipline are rare. Students believe this is the result of a firm hand

wielded in the home by their father. Instructors add the following facts: education is not compulsory above the primary level, there is a strong selective factor in the admission process which tends to eliminate the problem student, the student's respect for his father extends to include his teacher, and the traditions and practices of the school tend to reinforce this relationship. When problems do occur, the parents are asked to take whatever measures may be necessary to improve the behavior of the student. If their efforts are unsuccessful, the student is not retained in school.

After José has completed his final year in the prevocational school, he will enter one of the six vocational schools which are located in various parts of the city. Each school is devoted to a specialized area of study (mechanical and electrical engineering, civil engineering and architecture, chemical engineering, textile engineering, medical-biological sciences, economic-administrative sciences). The training covers a period of two years, equivalent in school years to the tenth and eleventh grades in our high school. José will attend Vocational School No. 2 of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering. Here his basic training in science and mathematics will be strengthened (see program on p. 329, col. 2).

José will get added experience in preparing molds and casting molten metals in the foundry. In the machine shop, he will learn to perform the operations of machining metals and will learn the importance of accuracy in dimensions and measurements. He will construct motors of various type and capacity in the electric shop and will learn to locate trouble and make repairs.

When his vocational course has been completed, José hopes to go on to the professional school of engineering where, during a period of four years, he will study to become an aeronautical engineer.

Some of his friends who are with him now in Prevocational No. 3, however, will not be so fortunate. For many of them, this

will be the end of their formal schooling. The urgent need to earn money to contribute to the meager resources of their families, or in some cases to support themselves entirely, forces great numbers of young people into the labor pool at an early age. It is thought that the education they have received thus far will give them a considerable advantage, and that they will be able to rise more rapidly in the ranks of the workers.

A similar situation occurs when the student completes the vocational course and finds that it is impossible to continue on to a professional school. Many of these young people find a place in industry and commerce, forming a technical group that is between the worker and the professional.

For the youth who has decided early in his training to become a technician, however, the National Polytechnic Institute offers a more direct approach through schools at the subprofessional level. Training is open to students who have completed the prevocational or the secondary school courses. At the commercial school, he may enroll in a two-year course in bookkeeping. A three-year course at the medical school will train him in optometry. Three years of study at the industrial school, Wilfrido Massieu, will give him the diploma "technician in construction." At the same school, four-year courses prepare him to be a technician in the mechanical, electrical, or communication fields.

The subprofessional training program is conducted in the evening from six to ten o'clock, since most of the students work during the daytime. A young man who is employed as a laborer or machine operator in a shop, for example, hopes to improve his situation by preparing for the career of mechanical technician. He will take the program of studies shown on pp. 329-330.

By the time his training has been completed, he will have followed a program similar to that of the professional engineer, although not to the same depth or degree of

intensity. He will, however, be well prepared for advancement to technical and supervisory positions within his chosen field.

There are other youths, however, who go no farther than the primary grades and, after working at various dead-end jobs, wish to learn a trade in order to better their way of life. For them, the institute has still another program, which is taught in the evening so that those who work can continue on their jobs. They learn the fundamentals of a trade as well as some basic, though watered-down, academic subjects. Training is given for the trades of machinist, auto mechanic, electrician, radio repairman, and construction aid. A young man who wanted to enter the automotive trade would take the program of studies described on page 330.

As with most other programs within the institute, there are many times the number of applicants than can be accommodated. Nevertheless, through its prevocational, vocational, professional, subprofessional, and trade training programs the National Polytechnic Institute has proved to be a strong factor in the growing industrial economy of Mexico.

PROGRAM IN PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

Course	Hours per Week
FIRST YEAR	
Mathematics I	5
Biology I	3
Geography I	3
Universal history I	3
Spanish language and literature I	4
English I	3
Drawing	2
Civics I	3
Modeling	2
Woodshop	3
Physical education	2
SECOND YEAR	
Mathematics II	4
Physics	4
Biology II	3
Geography II	2
Universal history II	2
Mexican history I	2
Spanish language and literature II	3
English II	2

SECOND YEAR (Cont.)

Mechanical drawing	3
Civics II	3
Sheet metal and plumbing	3
Physical education	2

THIRD YEAR

Mathematics III	3
Chemistry	4
Biology III	3
Geography III	2
Mexican history II	3
Spanish language and literature III	3
English III	2
Civics III	2
Foundry	3
Metal shop	3
Electric shop	3
Physical education	2

PROGRAM IN VOCATIONAL SCHOOL NO. 2

Course	Hours per Week
FIRST YEAR	
Mathematics	9
Physics	6
Chemistry	3
Mechanical drawing	4
Technical English	3
Physics lab.	2
Chemistry lab.	2
Machine shop	5
Introduction to literature	3
SECOND YEAR	
Mathematics	6
Physics	6
Chemistry	4
Mechanical drawing	6
Technical English	3
Introduction to social sciences	3
Physics lab.	2
Chemistry lab.	2
Electric shop and foundry	4

PROGRAM FOR MECHANICAL TECHNICIAN

Course	Hours per Week
FIRST YEAR	
Analytic geometry and differential calculus	3
Physics	3
Electricity and laboratory	4½
Technology of materials	3
Drawing (elements of machinery)	3
Industrial health and safety	2
Foundry	6
SECOND YEAR	
Differential and integral calculus	3
Strength of materials	3
Thermodynamics and hydraulics	4½
Standards and procedures in mechanics	2
Machine drawing	4½
Industrial organization	2
Machine shop	6

THIRD YEAR		FIRST YEAR (Cont.)	
Design of machine parts	3	Technology	2
Lubrication	3	Geometric line drawing	3
Thermal and hydraulic machines	4½	Spanish	2
Time and motion study	3	Civics	2
Operations and means of transportation	3	Auto shop (second semester)	4
Costs of production, operation, conservation	2	Bench-metal shop (first semester)	2
Internal combustion engines	4½	Forging shop (first semester)	2

FOURTH YEAR		SECOND YEAR	
Electrical equipment and machinery	3	Applied technology	3
Refrigeration and air conditioning	3	Mathematics	3
Thermal and hydraulic layout	4½	Geography and history	2
Heat treatment laboratory	3	Applied drawing	2
Plans and estimates	3	Auto shop	4½
Labor legislation	2	Machine shop	3
Internal combustion engine shop	6		

PROGRAM FOR AUTO MECHANIC

COURSE	Hours per Week	THIRD YEAR	
FIRST YEAR			
Arithmetic and algebra	3	Auto shop	4½
Mechanics	4½	Automotive electricity	4½
		Electricity (theory)	3
		English	2
		Health and first aid	2
		Welding shop	2

The Library Revitalized

The plain facts of the matter are that the library has been shamefully neglected in the current educational debate and proposals for reform. It too, along with other parts of the school, is long overdue for major renovation and expansion. We are in no position or disposition to assess the blame for this appalling state of affairs. Librarians, teachers, administrators, boards of education are all, we suspect, in part derelict in their duties in this regard. Even if the community attitude has been one of indifference, we cannot escape our professional responsibility for altering the situation. We are concerned with the necessity for a drastic change in the current state of affairs. . . .

Substantial infusions of funds, leadership, initiative, and imagination are required so that a library center conducive to vigorous intellectual inquiry may become a part of every high school. In some schools the space is already available but unused. In others, enlarging and remodeling will be re-

quired. In the planning of new school buildings a more imaginative conception of the place of the library in the school must prevail. We need to lift the sights and unleash the competence of those who staff the library, and capitalize upon the skill and cooperation with which the teaching staff is capable of using this important tool. The size, variety, and quality of materials available to pupils and to teachers need attention.

Neat, tidy, quiet rows of books and pupils, all in their proper places, need to give way until the library becomes the central, busy intersection of high school life. The goal to be achieved is for no day and certainly no week to pass without every student and faculty member making active and direct use of the library. The outmoded concept of the library as merely a storehouse of knowledge needs to be replaced by the view of the library as one of the school's most vigorous agencies of teaching.—*California Journal of Secondary Education*.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

EDITOR'S NOTE

In many respects, the junior high school is different today from its counterpart five years ago. Here are some of the newer forces having impact on the junior-high curriculum:

(1) The increasing compaction of the secondary-school curriculum (grades 7-12) in which subject matter is being introduced earlier to qualified students of academic talent.

(2) The emphasis on greater substance in practically all the junior-high curriculum.

(3) The heavier accent on skills essential to reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

These are only a few of the latest impacts on junior-high-school education. None is more important in our judgment than the third item. If students can be given greater help in improving their skills in communication and interpretation, they will benefit both now and later.

Here are three articles dealing with reading and creative writing that focus primary attention on the junior-high-school student. The authors are highly qualified professional leaders who have much more than a handshaking acquaintance with English language arts in the junior high school. Read what they say, for they are reporting on large problems.

The Skiles Program for Reading Improvement

By FRANCIS X. VOGEL

TEACHER, SKILES JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, EVANSTON, ILLINOIS

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADEQUATE READING PROGRAMS may well be the next frontier of the junior high schools. At a time when it is not uncommon to find that 25 per cent of the junior-high-school students may be underachieving in reading and that in some areas 40 per cent of the students may be reading as much as three years below grade level, and when there is such a large selection of reading material from which to choose, the junior high school cannot meet the needs of all its students with a remedial program and/or a program for the more gifted students.

Dr. James B. Conant, in his report to the National Association of Secondary-School Principals in Portland on February 27, 1960, made two comments about the need for the teaching of reading in the junior high school.

His first comment expressed his concern with the large number of our ninth-grade students who are reading at the sixth-grade level or below. His second comment included this quotation, "I cannot stress enough the increased interest, especially in the large cities, in the whole reading problem. The teaching of reading has ceased to

be an elementary school problem; it now is a function of the schools at all levels."

To meet the demands for improved reading skills imposed upon our society by the tremendous amount of printed material constantly being published, to reduce the range of reading levels when the students in a heterogeneous home room may have reading abilities ranging from the second- to the twelfth-grade levels, and to provide more nearly adequately for the teaching of literature at a time when the study of science and the technical subjects is currently stressed, a comprehensive reading-literature program was developed for the Skiles Junior High School in Evanston, Illinois.

At Skiles, students who read below grade level constitute a small minority, but the staff has been concerned with those students whose intelligence test scores and reading test scores indicate that their reading achievement has not kept pace with their ability. To provide the needed instruction in the reading skills for these "under-achievers," many of whom are of average or above-average ability, and to meet the need mentioned by Dr. Conant of providing reading instruction for all of our students, have been two of the guidelines in organizing the comprehensive reading-literature program.

Organized in 1957 as a two-year junior high school, Skiles began its career in September of that year with only 180 seventh-grade students. By the following year, however, it was in full operation with 500 seventh and eighth graders and an increased staff. Special subject teachers, such as art and drama consultants, were now available to work with the language arts-social studies teachers in a program especially designed for Skiles from its very beginning. I was included among the new staff, to help develop a reading program. After a semester of studying the students' needs and studying various reading programs throughout the country, the teachers presented the program in February, 1959, as an experiment.

The reading aspect of the comprehensive reading-literature program has five major characteristics.

First, reading instruction is provided for all students. Although the students who are reading below grade level and the students who are underachieving in reading may have the greatest need for reading instruction, it is felt that all students need instruction in reading. Certain of the reading skills can best be taught only after the students have successfully completed a developmental reading program provided by the elementary schools and after the students have reached a certain maturity not usually possessed below the seventh grade. Skills such as critical reading, improvement of reading speed, and improvement of the research skills so necessary in a time when a voluminous amount of printed material is being published which cannot be accepted at face value are emphasized in this program. In addition, more than 75 per cent of the Skiles students plan to enter college. Because of the high correlation between adequate reading skills and success in college, it was felt that these combined reasons demanded a reading program for all the students.

Second, the reading and literature instruction is provided to groups of students organized on the basis of their ability and achievement. This plan is in keeping with the Skiles philosophy which states that ability grouping will be confined to individual skill subjects and will not pertain to all subject fields. The criteria used for grouping in reading—namely, intelligence and reading achievement—are not identical to the criteria used for grouping in mathematics. The result is a flexible plan which enables a student to be placed with his proper group in both subjects. In addition, reading is the only subject within the language arts-social studies block of time in which students are selected on the basis of ability. Thus, the student feels that the heterogeneous language arts-social studies

home room is his "home base" and he will not be labeled solely by some ability group in which he is placed.

The program operates with four basic groups: the accelerated, the underachieving, the average, and the slow learner, with further subdivisions as needed. A normal schedule provides for five home-room classes of approximately thirty students each, to be divided into six reading groups with the home-room teachers and the reading consultant each teaching one group. Dividing five classes into six groups enables the slow-learner and the underachiever classes to be of smaller size, usually about fifteen students. These smaller classes provide the opportunity for a more individualized type of program for their members.

While the accelerated, average, and slow-learner groups are more or less traditional groups, the underachievers are not usually identified and provided for in ability grouping plans. To identify the underachievers, the Skiles program uses a formula adapted from Harris and Strang. This formula states that junior-high-school students whose reading ages are one or more years below their mental age are underachieving in reading. To reduce the possible range of ability of students placed in this category, only students of average or above-average ability are included in the class. By assigning to the underachiever group a teacher who has had graduate training in the teaching of reading and by limiting the class size to a maximum of eighteen students, it is possible to provide the individual-type program which will result in a significant improvement in the reading ability of these students who may be the largest waste of talent in education today. It is my opinion, based on limited research, that 25 per cent or more of junior-high-school students may be underachieving in reading.

Third, reading is taught as a subject within the curriculum. Instruction is provided as a regular part of the language arts program, with literature being the natural

vehicle for the teaching of reading. What better way to study critical reading than to enjoy Mark Twain and discover that there is much more to *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* than just the story line? Whether reading and literature are taught as part of the language arts-social studies block of time or as a part of a separate English class, often there is not enough time for everything and too often it is the reading and literature which suffer.

Fourth, in-service training for teachers is provided as an integral part of the program. Having a language arts staff composed mainly of secondary-prepared English-history teachers who have had one or two courses in high-school literature with a few elementary-prepared teachers who have had a course or two in primary or intermediate reading demands that time be spent working with the staff in determining objectives and preparing methods and materials if the program is to be a success. One of the most rewarding of my duties has been working with an enthusiastic but demanding staff. Any junior high school developing a reading program must consider the need for an in-service program. At Skiles, the program developed co-operatively with the staff is much superior to any program I might have developed by myself.

Fifth, a reading clinic is provided for the most severely retarded students who seem to need the highly individualized instruction possible only in a clinic situation. A trained clinician works with students who are reading at the second-, third-, and fourth-grade levels. Although these students are usually of below-average ability, they are capable of a higher level of work than they are doing. By providing instruction on a regular basis to students in groups of three and four, it is possible to improve their achievement to a level more nearly commensurate with their ability. The reading clinic has recorded some startling improvements as a result of the clinic program. Any junior high with a remedial

program probably has had similar results.

Improvement of reading skills in the content subjects is a problem that plagues high-school and college students as well as junior-high students. In reading a math problem, for instance, many students read it once and immediately become discouraged because they don't know how to solve the problem. The Skiles students are not immune to this deficiency. In an attempt to remedy the situation, a unit has been prepared in co-operation with the math, science, and social studies teachers in which both the reading teacher and the subject teacher will present a short unit on reading in the content areas. It is hoped that this emphasis from many quarters will establish and reinforce the correct method of reading in the content subjects.

Inasmuch as a junior-high-school reading program is sandwiched between the elementary and high-school programs, liaison with these schools is a must. At Skiles, a program is being developed in which the language arts teachers and the reading consultant meet with the elementary teachers to discuss the reading programs and reading problems of the various schools. In addition, the junior-high-school teachers are given released time to visit elementary-school reading classes. The liaison with the high school includes a yearly meeting between the reading consultant and the high-school reading personnel. The reading consultant also sends recommendations to the high school concerning the placement of the Skiles graduates in the reading program of the Evanston Township High School.

It is felt that the reading phase of the comprehensive reading-literature program as developed with the foregoing characteristics has met the needs demanded of it without requiring a disproportionate share of the total curriculum or of the language arts-social studies block of time.

The literature aspect of the program provides not only the traditional study of literature through anthologies and literature text-

books, but also the study of selected classics, such as *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *Moby Dick*, *The Red Badge of Courage*, and *The Last of the Mohicans*. The classics are purchased in the paperback editions, thus enabling each student to have his own personal copy of the book.

The staff is preparing a guide to library reading. Preliminary studies have shown that a well-organized library program is an indispensable part of a comprehensive program. To encourage the students to do more reading and to read books of a better quality, three lists of books organized on different reading levels have been prepared for them.

The lists, divided into six sections, range in number from about four hundred books for the better students to about two hundred books for the less able. Students will be asked to do their library reading in books on these lists in the hope that students may develop an enduring love and appreciation for good literature.

A lay advisory committee has been organized to assist in the preparation of the final library lists. Because the library books a student reads may have a deep and enduring effect upon him, it seemed only natural to ask the parents to study the lists and participate in the preparation of them. Too often schools are interested in using lay advisory committees only when they are needed to help pass a bond issue. Our feeling is that lay committees can play an important part in strengthening the curriculum of a school. Skiles is blessed with a highly educated and interested parent and patron group. It is envisioned that the lay advisory committee might develop into a family reading circle which would meet monthly to discuss and promote good literature. Such an activity could be especially valuable for the gifted students who are able to read and understand many adult books if proper guidance is provided. Schoolteachers do not have a monopoly on good literature. Most schools have a large

array of talents and skills available through their patrons. I believe in using this talent to enlarge upon a school's curricular and extracurricular offerings.

The comprehensive reading-literature program of the Skiles Junior High School is still too young to be evaluated objectively, but the interest and enthusiasm of the teachers, students, and parents are encouraging. The program is continuing to develop and grow; work is being completed on a reading guide to provide more adequately for the teaching of the reading skills, especially to the above-average students, and plans for improving the in-service phase of the program are being developed.

Junior-high-school reading programs, long advocated by the reading specialists, are finally becoming more numerous. Any program which, if not initiated, might well affect 40 per cent of the students adversely, cannot be left to "next year." In 1956, the convention of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, meeting in Chicago, heard Mr. A. H. Lauchner and Dr. W. S. Gray outline the four basic needs of a good junior-high-school reading program. They said the program must provide reading instruction for all the students, that the students must be grouped on the basis

of their ability and achievement, that the reading instruction must be taught as a subject within the curriculum, and that an in-service program is a must. Skiles has built a reading program adapting these guidelines and adding others as needed. Any junior high school attempting to meet the needs of all its students must ask itself if it is providing the most basic and perhaps the most important of all skills which its students so desperately need for success and happiness in life.

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TV Instruction in Reading

By JOSEPH O. LORETAN

ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT, DIVISION OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS, NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

IT IS INDEED A RARE INVESTMENT that can provide both needed income and capital growth, plus the added bonus of extra dividends. When the Television Reading Project was established in 1959 in the New York City Junior High School Division, a number of skeptics invested part of their edu-

cational capital in a "blue chip" investment.

Because of the great size of the school system in New York City, problems of educational improvement which exist all over the country flourish here in almost unbelievable magnitude. To complicate further

the great degree of need, there are many difficulties which are unique to a cosmopolis of nearly nine million people, with its dynamic social structure and its mobile population.

Investment Aims

The Junior High School Division is faced with the responsibility of developing the maximum reading ability of every pupil in grades seven, eight, and nine. Therefore, it is necessary to provide a developmental program of instruction in reading skills for all pupils reading on grade level or above. Also, corrective reading instruction must be given to the many "retarded readers": pupils who have failed to receive maximum benefit from elementary instruction; those who have migrated from Puerto Rico or from foreign lands and who use English as a second language; youngsters who have entered the city schools from small rural institutions with inadequate educational opportunities. Clearly, this is a task requiring the greatest possible effort on the part of every teacher.

To compound the difficulties of an already complex situation, the junior high schools must provide for the needs of teachers in the reading program. Every year, hundreds of new and inexperienced instructors enter our schools. They join great numbers of experienced and well-trained subject-matter specialists who are expert in their fields but who are new to the concept of reading instruction as an integral part of every aspect of the total curriculum.

Faced with the necessity of meeting the reading instructional needs of tens of thousands of pupils and of hundreds of teachers, we decided it would be advisable to risk the limited capital available (a small corps of highly trained reading specialists) in a series of television reading lessons.

Skillful Management of Assets

During the planning stage of the project, two reading consultants worked on the

scope and sequence of the reading skills to be taught. At this time, they developed the *Teachers' Guide* as an aid to the effective use of the TV lessons and as a resource for additional instruction. This publication enabled the classroom teacher to prepare her class for the televised lessons, to direct their viewing for the greatest benefit, and to reinforce their learnings by meaningful follow-up activities. Two courses of lessons were planned for presentation to seventh-grade pupils, with the Corrective Series televised every Tuesday morning, and the Developmental Series every Thursday.

In the execution of the TV lessons, instruction was not designed to duplicate the usual classroom situation, but rather to utilize fully a unique medium of communication. The three television teachers gave lessons with dramatic variety in presentation and with special appeal for seventh graders. Two other reading consultants lavished special attention on visual aids to teaching. Emphasis was placed on the development of charts, pictures, graphs, and projected materials which were unusual, vivid, and especially suited to the medium of television. However, although these materials were conceived to take maximum advantage of video instruction, every one was readily adaptable to simplified execution and use by teachers in the classroom. In short the materials, like the lessons themselves, were presented as a fine blend of theatrical appeal and educational practicality. For example: the lesson "Detectives at Work" taught word analysis and meaning clues; "Getting to the Root of It" taught structural analysis and root words; "Signposts to Meaning" taught identification of meanings through context; "King Pin of Ideas" taught the main idea; and "Buried Treasure" taught inferred meanings.

To insure efficient utilization of the television series, administrators of all junior high schools received advance advice by circular of the division recommendations in regard to selection of participating classes,

programing to meet the weekly telecast schedule, and the proper physical conditions for viewing. Borough reading coordinators visited the schools to give further assistance. All phases of the entire project were under the constant supervision of the Junior High School Division Reading Coordinator.

Investment Yield

The dividends paid by our educational investment were impressive. Classes of seventh-year pupils in almost all of New York City's 127 junior high schools received expert reading instruction through the efforts of a handful of specialists. In general, the number of pupils participating was determined by the availability of viewing facilities. In addition, uncounted numbers of pupils in other school systems throughout the state received the benefits of these lessons as part of the Regents' Educational Television Project. The venture produced a handsome profit.

But not only was our income large; our educational capital grew as well. The television lessons, giving substance to the suggestions in the *Teachers' Guide*, proved a remarkably effective motivating force and training device for teachers in the area of reading instruction. So hundreds of teachers with new understanding and capability for teaching reading were added to our wealth.

Still another capital gain accrued in the development of the Junior High School Reading Skills Diagnostic Test. This in-

strument was evolved by the reading coordinators to assist the participating teachers in the television project in determining specific pupil needs for additional practice in the various reading skills. The test is now in wide use in our schools as a diagnostic aid.

Quite unexpectedly, the investment is yielding extra dividends this year. These are deriving from television's remarkable residuals, the kinescopes. Using the filmed lessons in corrective reading in conjunction with the all-valuable *Teachers' Guides*, seven in-service courses in techniques of corrective reading instruction are being given this term for teachers who were unable to participate in the original presentation. Since this procedure might quite reasonably be repeated in the future, it is impossible to estimate the total educational gain from this source.

Investment reports are usually stated with emphasis on numbers rather than on words. But our report is an exception, because the investment was exceptional.

The talents of ten reading specialists were invested in the television project, chiefly on a part-time basis. No accounting of total hours expended can be made, since nobody watched the clock. But it is now quite clear that these hours of work have produced and are continuing to yield benefits which cannot be calculated. The modest venture has become an educational bonanza. Now the only question is, "What new securities can we add to our investment portfolio?"

Creative Book Reports in Junior High

By CHARLES E. LAPP, JR.

DEPARTMENT CHAIRMAN, WASHINGTON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS

Generally speaking, from the student's point of view, the reporting of books he has read falls into the category of "busywork," to be done as painlessly as possible. This is

a dilemma confronting many a teacher of English. Although the teacher knows that book reporting should involve some creative experience for the junior-high-school stu-

dent, oftentimes the book report is recognized as a "curriculum necessity" and is accepted in the stereotyped form of a synopsis.

Undoubtedly there is educational merit in the summarization and classification skills inherent in the typical book-reporting techniques which are such an important part of the language arts curriculum. Yet, as the very name "language arts" implies, creativity should not be stifled in any area within an arts program. Needless to say, the young artist or musician in the fine arts areas does not have the same static repetitive experience foisted upon him each time he experiences a new medium within the curriculum. If the art of language usage is to develop creative talents in its students, we, as English teachers, cannot afford to overlook any area within our program wherein this creativity can be generated to a fuller degree. The formerly "static" book report can be turned into such an area.

A written book report can be broken down into two sections (see page 339)—one remaining constant and including the synopsis essentials such as title, author, setting, plot, main characters, striking incidents, and evaluations of the book; the other giving the student variety and the opportunity to release creatively his feelings about the book he has just read. This second section of which I speak should test the imaginative, creative, and writing skills of the individual pupil. It should afford the student the opportunity to analyze critically that which he has experienced and offer him varied opportunities to express his reading adventures. The creative ramifications should be all too apparent if an English teacher was to offer her class the following opportunities of book reporting in the suggested Section II:

A. Copy a passage from the book you have just read, being sure to put quotation marks around it. Skip a line and tell the story of a moment in your life that the quotation from the book reminds you of. In this

passage about yourself, tell where and when the experience took place, using sound and color words as you describe the experience. Build up the scene in the way you think the writer of the book would do.

B. Imagine yourself as being a door-to-door salesman. Your job is selling books. Keeping in mind that this is the way you make your living and that you receive an extra bonus by selling the book you have just read, write the approach you would take in trying to sell the book to a mythical buyer.

C. Think of yourself as being the main character of the book. Choose a situation from the book wherein you think you might have acted differently from the main character. In detail, describe the scene as you think it might have taken place if you were the main character.

D. Think of yourself as being a Hollywood movie producer. Describe why you think the book you have just read would make a good movie. Explain in detail which parts you think would have to be left out and why. Describe parts that you think would be especially interesting and why. Explain which parts you think would be difficult to film and tell the reason for this. Also suggest which movie stars you would choose to play the main characters, and why. Would you change the plot?

E. Think of yourself as being in the presence of the author of this book. You are a newspaper reporter conducting an interview. What questions would you ask the author if you had this opportunity? Write in an interesting way the questions you would ask, and the answers to the questions that you think the author would give about his book.

F. Consider yourself the son or daughter of the author. Your father passed away before he completed the book you have just read. He has completed it only to the *climax* of the story. If the book is to be published, you must complete the story. Tell how you might have ended the book differ-

ently from the way the author did if you had this opportunity.

G. Consider yourself a writer-researcher. Your job is to relate in a magazine article the sequel to the story you have just read. Tell what happened to the main characters of the story after the book leaves off. Make this description of events imaginative and interesting.

Perhaps the use of such an approach as this (and I am sure there are others similarly thought provoking) to the reporting of reading selections will outmode the preempted classification of book reports as busywork and supplant it with a "looked-forward-to" anticipation of creativeness in the eyes of the student, while offering the teachers of language arts the opportunity to take one more step toward being truly "artful" in their instruction.

Written Book Report Form for Student Use

Each written book report which you will hand in will have two sections or parts. For every report which you make, Section I will be the same; it will never vary. Following is the section which will remain constant in each of your written reports:

SECTION I

- (a) List the title of the book (be sure to underline it).
- (b) List the author's full name.
- (c) In a brief paragraph tell the setting of the story—that is, tell where and when the story took place.
- (d) Summarize in several short paragraphs the plot of the story.
- (e) Name the five most important characters of the story, and in a sentence for each, identify and describe them.
- (f) In a short paragraph, relate in your own words one of the incidents of the story which you enjoyed most.

- (g) From the following *scale of evaluation* assign the book you read the appropriate number corresponding with your feelings about the book. Then, briefly explain why you choose this as the book's evaluation.

SCALE OF EVALUATION

- 10. Undoubtedly the finest book I have ever read, and I recommend it as required reading for anyone truly interested in fine literature.
- 9. One of the best books I have read. A book which I found difficult to forget and hard to put down once I started the story.
- 8. A very excellent book which makes enjoyable and exciting reading.
- 7. A book that is well above the average and held my interest from beginning to end.
- 6. A very good book, readily understood and enjoyable to read.
- 5. An average book, well written and worth the time spent reading it.
- 4. A good book, but "slow" reading in parts.
- 3. This book had some good parts, but for the most part was rather boring and uninteresting.
- 2. A slow-moving, poorly written book which was very difficult to complete and did not hold my interest.
- 1. One of the poorest, if not the worst book it has ever been my misfortune to read.

SECTION II

From the categories listed for this section (see *A-G*, pages 338-339), you will choose one for each book report. For no two successive book reports will this choice be the same. After you have made your choice, you will write to sufficient length, in an interesting and creative manner, closely following the directions listed for each category.

A Day with the TV Teacher

By EDWARD H. GOLDMAN

I MUST CONFESS at the outset, that the title of this piece is misleading. The only thing typical about a television teacher's day is that it is never typical. Unlike other toilers in the educational vineyard, his work is not divided into neat chronological parcels called days. Instead, it consists of two phases: preparation behind the cameras, and performance in front of them. Although the performance phase fits into pre-arranged time slots, the preparation phase is continual.

Like everyone else, I have always been familiar with the phrase, "There's no business like show business." But I never knew, except in a vague sort of way, what it really meant. I do now. For the teacher catapulted from the classroom into television finds himself in show business. He must, of course, work within the framework of good pedagogy. But *showing* is the key. In planning a lesson, his new emphasis is "How can I show this?" rather than "What can I say about this?" The visual content of his lessons thus becomes the nub of his work.

In addition to being the "talent," a tele-

vision teacher is the "producer" of his shows. Behind this innocent word lies the nucleus of his new existence. For each lesson that he produces, he makes, invents, contrives, begs, borrows (and is sometimes tempted to steal) "visuals." He writes the script, edits his film clips, arranges his material in sequential order, rehearses it with his director, then hopes for the best. If he does a good show, he will seldom hear about it. If he makes a mistake in content or grammar, he will probably get fan mail. To the teacher working in a 21-inch goldfish bowl, criticism is an occupational hazard. He learns to accept it and profits from it. There is this compensation: once the initial period of organized confusion is over, his life becomes merely hectic.

Every lesson requires new visuals, the more authentic, the better. We might borrow an antique microscope from the Franklin Institute, fossil ferns from the Wagner Institute, the thigh bone of Java Man from the University Museum, or a solar battery from the Bell Telephone Company.

For loans of visuals of a less exotic variety our schools are most co-operative. So, too, are the merchants and restaurateurs on Chestnut Street. On an otherwise uneventful afternoon, any one of them might be approached by you-know-who for the loan of a baby alligator, a toy sports car, a pharmaceutical balance, fresh flowers, a skin diver's mask, or some seaweed (packed about lobsters). The insatiable appetite of the television camera for new material demands a full pipeline of visuals, ever flowing to the studios and back to the kind lenders.

Each visual presents a unique problem to the teacher and to the technical staff of the station. Where shall we place it? Will it

EDITOR'S NOTE

If you think that you have problems, read about one day in the life of Goldman. He is head of the science department, South Philadelphia High School, Philadelphia. But it's what the author does on TV that makes interesting reading. It's about the triweekly television program he presents in tenth-grade biology. Originally, this account appeared in the Philadelphia Teachers Association NEWS LETTER. CH Editorial Board member Clayton E. Buell suggested that we publish it. We're glad that he did.

work when the time comes? Does it have enough contrast to show on camera? Does it have the ideal 3:4 ratio for the television screen? Can it be blown up without loss of clarity?

In the teaching of biology the problem is further complicated by the fact that many visuals are living. During rehearsal, a culture of paramecia shows up beautifully under the lens of the microprojector. The animals dart about, giving an excellent demonstration of ciliary locomotion. But how will they behave forty minutes later when it's time for them to "go on"? Will the heat of the studio lights slow them down? Will the water droplet in which they swim evaporate? Frequent checks right up to airtime allay some apprehension. Nevertheless, I go on with my fingers crossed.

One morning, the lobster was the subject under consideration. Accordingly, a living three pounder was procured. An hour before airtime he was put through rehearsal. As soon as the wooden splints were removed from the joints of his chelipeds, he gave us a spirited demonstration of his new-found freedom. A pencil placed in the jaws of his right claw was promptly crushed with a flourish of arthropod vigor. Good actor! I got ready for the show with proper respect. Pencils and fingers could easily be confused by an invertebrate with a low I.Q.

"Lights up! Check out the mike! Stand by!"

The familiar wave from the floorman, and I was on. My "guest" had barely been introduced when he unceremoniously went limp and left to meet his reward.

If you had tuned in that morning you would have been treated to the faintly ridiculous picture of a heavily gloved teacher holding a dead crustacean, explaining lamely that his specimen had developed stage fright. And this, a full year before the wide public interest in rigged television!

For teaching human anatomy, a skeleton is an enormously effective visual. Not a Halloween skeleton, but the articulated

mortal remains of *Homo sapiens*. My school owns such an item, which I could borrow with a minimum of red tape. But how does one transport a skeleton to the studio? After some reflection, I decided the safest and most practical way was to carry it gently in my arms. So I hailed a taxi. Up to this point I had always regarded cabbies as extraordinarily blasé people. When my visual and I took our places on the back seat, however, this one's double take convinced me that he had not yet seen everything!

When you sit in a cab with a skeleton on your lap (a noted anthropologist informed me later that it was a twenty-six-year-old she) the silliest notions come easily to mind. Suppose your driver goes through a red light or violates a stop sign? Suppose further, that an officer stops him to deliver a ticket or a lecture? Suppose also that the officer looks into the back at a passenger who is obviously more than simply eccentric? I'm sure you can see the possibilities. However, we arrived without incident. Nevertheless, the last twenty feet between the cab and the door of the station did provide an interesting diversion for many.

Although the gathering of visuals and the preparation of lessons occupy most of the television teacher's time, the proof of the pudding is still in the presentation. My colleagues and I often discuss the question of what makes an effective TV teacher. A variety of qualities are mentioned, but the consensus revolves about the quality we rudely refer to as "ham."

I should like to suggest several other assets. A TV teacher should have a big basement or attic, preferably both. As this work progresses, he becomes heir to pieces of "art-work": shoe boxes, magazine clippings, oddly shaped pieces of wood, spools of wire, old flower pots, modeling clay, and a variety of oddments which defy classification. To keep the dining room, bedroom, and kitchen from degenerating into a hopeless clutter, extraterritorial storage areas are essential.

A more important asset is an understanding spouse. She must be one who can adjust to odd hours, odd errands, and odd preoccupations. At dinner one evening, she might say, "Dear, don't you think Mrs. So and So

looks exceptionally well in her new hairdo?"

Our hero, rapt in next Wednesday's lesson, vaguely aware of having heard something, might reply brightly, "I think I'll show it this way."



Are We the Punchboard Profession?

By SCOTT D. THOMSON
Santa Clara, California

The primary problem of administration is the selection and development of competent teachers. An outstanding staff means an outstanding school. Each administrator realizes this, and puts forth great efforts to secure a really adequate faculty.

Yet, in many respects, this selection process resembles a chance affair. Teacher trainees are sliced off in a block, placed on edge, and assembled in neat rows for the various teacher seekers.

These seekers, perennial prowlers of placement files, want to "bring home the bacon to old Winsock High." In essence, they hope to hit the jackpot on the personnel punchboard. Sometimes they do. But often a short personal interview and the intuitive flash of insight fail. Nor do the grade transcripts and recommendations tell enough. The result is too frequently a teacher placed but unsuited for the job.

Is this necessary? If the profession had an improved training and selecting process, there would be less danger in missing the jackpot and punching out a real dud.

We all know that a competent and satisfied faculty can create an almost self-oiling "larnin'" machine. This is the goal of proper personnel selection. The urgent problem is to get more of these on the road. To do so will require an improvement not only of our selection processes but of our training and promotion processes as well.

To train teachers you must first attract people. To attract people you must destroy an unfavorable

attitude toward teaching. To destroy this unfavorable attitude, you must freeze the rapid annual turnover in the profession (from 5 to 26 per cent per year in the secondary schools), and to stop the turnover rate you must breed satisfaction.

Satisfaction comes with pride, and pride means accomplishment. Accomplishment in our society is synonymous with success, and success with ability—primarily the ability to do a job. Our economic system is based on the belief that people are willing to pay for a good job. Are we admitting that we are not doing a good job by accepting such low pay?

Do we say too much, "Look what low pay I am getting," and too little shout, "Look what a necessary and good job I am doing"? At least as much popular effort should be spent on publicizing our successes as is expended on advertising our salaries. For, whatever the Republic owes in its greatness to a political system or an economic system, it owes in equal measure to the proficiency of its schools.

What we direly need are more leaders who, with vigorous and aggressive logic, will clearly paint for the nation a picture of the requirements necessary to make teaching a top profession, and what the resultant implications are for our nation in this sophisticated world if we don't make education a top profession. As an attendant benefit, more of the capable will then become interested in teaching because of the implied stature. In all this it is assumed the staff, the schedule, and the technical devices are utilized in a truly professional manner.

SCIENCE AND HOMEWORK

By PHILIP E. KALDAHL

IVAN TURGENEV in his *Fathers and Sons* noted a lack of understanding between generations during a period of social change. One generation was interested in the arts, playing the violin; the other generation was interested in science, dissecting frogs. Society is still changing, and Turgenev's observation can still be made.

Today a high-school boy of fifteen years often speaks a language which is new to his father. This is not the language of teen slang. The old man can dig that stuff. This is the language of science. High-school science courses contain a vocabulary that was not included in basic high-school and college courses only a few years ago.

Mr. Richard Steiner, a colleague of mine at Bellevue High School, Bellevue, Nebraska, became aware of this problem. Mr. Steiner is a tall, scholarly gentleman whose firmness and fairness win the respect of his students. He noted that some parents did not understand their students' assignments; some parents saw no need for the subject matter covered; some parents objected to the amount of homework required.

Mr. Steiner set out to solve the problem. Every week each student in his ninth-grade physical science classes was given a letter to

take home to his parents. The letters reached the homes. In the weekly letters both the long-range and the short-range assignments were explained. Relations with the parents improved as did the work of the students.

With the permission of Mr. Steiner, here are some selections from his letters. The paragraphs included are from letters sent to parents during the second semester of the 1959-60 school year.

"Last week the subject of light was discussed, and we saw two filmstrips dealing with it. I demonstrated the radiometer and asked the students to write a paragraph telling how they thought it worked. The next day the radiometer theory was explained and compared to student ideas. . . ."

"The modern quantum or photon theory is being used to explain the nature and origin of light in my classes. This idea on light has been accepted for many years, but has only recently been aired in high schools. . . ."

"Last week the progress check on term-paper research showed most students reasonably well prepared. A few had exceptionally detailed information. The term paper is to be accompanied by some sort of demonstration-type project such as a chart, model, or collection showing some phase of the research. This type of thing helps the student better to understand his chosen subject. Bellevue High School plans again this year a showing of student science achievement, where such charts and models will be displayed to the public. There will be a similar showing of science projects at the University of Omaha by students from many schools in this area. In order for my pupils to enter their work at the university, they must complete it three weeks before the actual class due date. Most have pledged to do this. . . ."

EDITOR'S NOTE

This article came to us from Peshawar, West Pakistan, where the author is on an overseas educational assignment. He is a Fulbright grantee at Government College in Peshawar. This is a devious route for a description of a good practice in Bellevue (Nebraska) High School initiated by Richard Steiner, teacher of ninth-grade physical science. And it is a good practice, we believe.

"In connection with the unit on electricity I demonstrated the production of a current chemically with a simple voltaic cell. I brought in the free-electron theory of conductivity in matter. We discussed Lenz's law, generators, motors, the coil rule, and the telephone. A test on magnetism, static electricity, and basic current theory was given. This unit on electricity is a long one and a rather difficult one for a student who doesn't keep up with his studies. . . ."

"Just a reminder, with the coming of warm weather it is pretty easy for students to push school work aside. Please keep up your interest in their home lessons. . . ."

"The Omaha trip is over and I consider it a success in most every way. The display was a good one, with many fine projects shown by Bellevue students. . . ."

"This week we will end the discussion of electricity with a quiz on electronics on Friday. I expect my students to understand only the basic theory behind radio, television, radar, and the like. I don't feel it is necessary to go into great detail at this level, but it seems reasonable that the freshmen of today must understand a bit of this elec-

tronic world which they now occupy. . . ."

"Not long ago I found myself recalling the high-school science courses of not many years past. When you studied the subject in school, I'll wager your books did not include anything on rockets, jets, atomic energy, television, radar, helicopters, Mach number, satellites, electron microscopes, synthetic rubber, nylon, vinyl, polyethylene plastics, orlon, penicillin, photons, solar batteries, transistors, fluorescent lighting, frequency modulation, and many more items included in our test. Did you discuss the Bohr hydrogen atom, thermionic emission, quantum mechanics, antimatter, mesons, fission, fusion, Geiger counters, cloud chambers, atomic submarines, fall out, solar furnaces, half life, cosmic rays, cyclotrons, space stations, reactors, cryogenics, germanium, polymerization, radiotelescopes, or a host of other subjects included as a part of a good ninth-grade physical science course in 1960? These things for the most part were not discovered or were not developed until 1945 or later. Do you really wonder why today's teen-ager has more homework than you did?"

◆ Portrayal of the Teacher

In summarizing the various aspects of attitudes expressed by and toward the high school teacher, we find that two factors are especially impressive. First is the lack of expression among the teachers themselves concerning the work they do, the lives they lead. For most of them, life is monotonous, pedestrian, and without hope of adventure, but they seldom complain; rather they are passive and resign themselves to their lot. The second impressive factor is the inconsistency between the description of these teachers and the attitude of their

public toward them. The teachers are described as having some admirable quality of personality or character, but more often than not, they are regarded with pity and sympathy on the one hand, and with condescension and ridicule on the other. Writers seem to have a penchant for giving the impression that our high school teachers are social misfits, lovable old bears . . . , quacks, "rag-ends of unsalable males and unmarriageable females," someone who is a school teacher and nothing more.—EDNA LUE FURNESS in the *Educational Forum*.

SLOW LEARNERS

EDITOR'S NOTE

We do not like the term "slow learners." But we wish to avoid using "below average students" or "retarded learners." Our title refers to those students who need more time to learn.

Within the past few years, we have given strong and continuing attention to the academically talented students. And this is all to the good. Most all teachers and administrators have read the Conant Report on The American High School Today and the half-dozen publications issued by the National Education Association's Project on the Academically Talented Student under the direction of Charles E. Bish.

At this time there are no reports on projects of similar scope on the unacademically talented—the slow learners. Because they too constitute an important segment of the secondary-school enrollment, they cannot be bypassed in the educational literature. That is why we think it is timely to present this series of three articles on the slow learner.

In 1941, the Richmond Hill (New York) High School instituted a four-year course for slow learners leading to a non-Regents diploma. The author of the first article was assigned to teach social studies to these slow learners and to serve as their guidance counselor until her retirement last year. The second article is by a director of guidance in Pennsylvania, and the third by a teacher in Michigan.

Characteristics of Slow Learners

By MARION MACDONALD COBB

KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK

A VISITOR ENTERING A ROOM occupied by a slow-learning class taught by an average teacher would notice many things less common to a class of average or superior students.

He would notice, first of all, that practically every student stopped what he was doing to look at the visitor. This is because slow-learning students are poorer at concentrating and usually have a shorter attention span than other students.

He would also notice that average height and weight of students in the slow-learning group will be greater than that for average or superior groups. This seems to be inconsistent with the fact that slow learners are not so well developed physically as are the

average or superior students of the same age until we recall that in the first year of high school, slow learners will be a year or two overage for the grade and hence a year or two older than the average students and three or four years older than the superior students in their class.

Thus the average slow learner among high-school freshmen is likely to be taller and heavier than his fellows because he is older than they are, not because he is duller than they are but in spite of it.

If the teacher is giving directions and gives them orally only once without illustration, the visitor will note apprehension on the faces of many of the students. They are afraid they will not "do it right." Because

they do want to "do it right," many will look to see how their neighbors are "doing it." This brings a reprimand from the average teacher. Half of those who look at their neighbors do it now "any way," but probably not the right way. The other half of those who looked at their neighbors will be likely to put their pens down, licked before they start.

One student will ask a question which the average teacher will regard as unnecessary or even foolish. If she indicates either of these reactions to the student, she has not only prevented him from doing a satisfactory piece of work but has prevented others from asking questions, the answers to which might have made it possible for them also to do the work requested. They do not want to be laughed at or reprimanded.

The visitor is likely to find that two or three students lost their pencils. One may have brought a pencil to school and may have lost it during the day. Another may have lent his to a fellow student and so he has none now although he will not tell that he lent it unless asked directly. A third student may have left home on the run and forgotten his pencil. There will be students, however, who have extra pencils and who will be glad to lend them if the teacher permits. The average teacher will not permit this but will deliver a lecture on "carelessness" and assign detentions to those without pencils.

If the lesson is one where students are asked to discuss some problem, there will be few, if any, volunteers. Slow learners are poor at discussion and are clever enough not to wish to appear at a disadvantage. If the lesson is a review of what has been well taught and learned, the visitor will notice many students sit up taller, some folding their hands on their desk as little children sometimes do, some waving their hands overenthusiastically; maybe one gets out of his seat, as all are eager to be called upon to show what they know. Someone is sure to ask, "Does it count?" meaning will they get

credit for right answers. They are delighted if sometimes a wise teacher will give them credit for right answers and not count wrong answers. Then and only then can one get a maximum of volunteers.

The visitor notices that when the teacher calls for the written homework, about a quarter of the class has failed to do it. When questioned as to why each did not do the required assignment many responses are, "I didn't know how to do it," or "I didn't know how you wanted it done," or "I didn't understand the assignment," or "I lost the assignment." No doubt these students are telling the truth and the failure is the teacher's rather than the students'. The average teacher does not even begin to understand the difficulties faced by slow learners. What may be a clear assignment for an average student may be practically meaningless to some slow learners.

If there is an opportunity to go to the board, then nearly all are desperately eager to be chosen. If the teacher produces a package of paper, many want to pass the papers. The greatest honor of all, however, is to be chosen to take a message to another room. They are not quite so eager to carry messages to the office.

Should the teacher, even an average teacher, ask for volunteers to bring something to school or to stay after school to help her, she is likely to get more volunteers from a slow-learning class than from a regular class providing the work is within their abilities.

If original compositions are being read, they will be short, and stereotyped, representing a narrow range of experience expressed by a very limited vocabulary and poor sentence structure. If it is a speech class, in which short speeches are the order of the day, at least one child will likely become ill in class. Probably at least two others will be absent who were present at school until that particular period. Maybe one wheedled a sick pass from the office, whereas the braver of the two just "cut." At

tendance on speech day in slow-learning classes with average teachers is always below normal.

Although there are attractive, well-dressed and well-groomed boys and girls among slow learners, the class as a whole may not be as prepossessing as a regular class. There are less likely to be quite as many sweet, pretty girls and good-looking, upstanding boys. There will likely be more who are carelessly and less well dressed, more who could be cleaner, perhaps. There are likely to be more children of foreign-born parents than in regular classes.

In classes of slow learners, there is likely to be more unrestrained laughter, evidence of less self-control if the average teacher should, perchance, say something funny. The laughter lasts longer and is likely to be higher pitched than in regular classes. Sometimes the class members lose control of themselves and as a result the average teacher loses control of the class. Such an experience is likely to be reflected in other periods throughout the rest of the day.

For a teacher to "spring" a test on slow learners is indeed a calamity. Most slow learners want to pass and many will really study for a test. If the test is given to them without notice so that they have no time to study, the whole class is likely to resent it and to regard the teacher as unfair. Such an occurrence has been known not only to affect a group disadvantageously for the remainder of the day but to cast its reflection on their school attitude throughout the week.

The visitor will note more nervous mannerisms than are common to most average or honor classes.

Then, too, the visitor will note that the students seem more honest in their attitude toward the teacher. None will be striving to make an effort or create a good impression on the teacher. The attitude of students toward their teacher is very much more important with slow learners than with other groups. Also it is true that the whole class

of slow learners is more likely to stand together in their attitude toward a teacher than are students of other groups. These slow learners seem to exhibit more group loyalty than do children better endowed mentally who are more likely to do independent thinking.

Many teachers regard it as punishment or at least as a raw deal if they are assigned slow-learning classes. The students are extremely sensitive to the teacher's attitude. They size up their teachers remarkably quickly and with considerable accuracy. A teacher who likes these students, who believes in their worth-whileness, and who has faith in them is readily discerned by the students and a maximum of effort on their part to please the teacher will result even if it means much study, which is the hardest thing for them to do.

When the average teacher turns her back on the students to write on the board at the beginning of the term, one or two are almost certain to "cut up."

When the bell rings at the close of the period, all flee as though they were getting out of jail, especially if the next period is "lunch" or "home." If the next period is also "jail," the exit is less hasty. At any rate, several students will forget some of their belongings and will interrupt two classes, the one to which they are going and the one which will next occupy the room they are leaving, in order to retrieve their possessions.

Suppose the next period they are to be taught by a teacher, who regards the assignment to a slow-learning class as an opportunity, one who believes in these young people. First of all the students are in their places much sooner. They are then far more willing to let her tell them something. They seem to have no difficulty in following directions, for the teacher speaks slowly in a low, clear voice, illustrating on the blackboard and anticipating possible misunderstandings which are likely to occur. When this teacher turns her back on the students

to write on the board, no disorder or inattention results for this teacher trained her class. She did not turn her back on her class until she knew she could do so without any untoward results. One or two students are likely to ask questions before doing what they are requested to do, probably the same students who asked or wanted to ask questions in the preceding classes. Their questions are heard courteously and answered in good faith.

This teacher does not ask for volunteers to discuss problems. She begins where the students are and gets no end of volunteers to review in order to build on to what has been already learned. This good start gives the students confidence and they are then the more ready to take an active part in the new work. These students know that everything they do is taken into account by their teacher. They are given a minimum of written work, all of it of evident value to the students. All of it is corrected and returned as soon as possible, common errors explained to the group, and individual errors explained to individuals when not understood.

In this class the teacher is characterized

by a keen sense of humor. When something funny happens, no one enjoys a laugh more than the teacher. All laugh together, not hilariously but joyously, and no one runs away with the situation, the teacher always having the class under her immediate control. No rowdiness spoiled the fun because in this class the students had learned that to overdo the fun today meant no fun for many days.

It is evident that the entire class likes this teacher very much. Whatever she wants, she gets, but of course she neither wants nor expects the impossible. A fine rapport exists between the teacher and the class. The bell rings but no one seems to rush out as before. The students gather their belongings, chat with one another, several stopping to speak to the teacher.

Thus it will be seen that as is the teacher, so is the class of slow learners. Differences in the classes just described lie in the attitude and skill of the teacher. As the attitude of the teacher improves, the attitude of the slow learners toward the teacher improves. Once the attitude of both teacher and of pupils is right, the rest is comparatively easy.

The Below-Average Student

By ALBERT M. LERCH

DIRECTOR OF GUIDANCE, NORTHAMPTON AREA JOINT HIGH SCHOOL, NORTHAMPTON, PENNSYLVANIA

THE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST rapped on the classroom door. The door was opened in response to his knock by the teacher. "Mrs. Smith, the supervisor, informed me that you have a pupil you desire to have tested," explained the psychologist.

"I certainly do," exclaimed the teacher in a voice tinged with both frustration and disgust. "Why there is nothing in her that you can reach. I'm completely disgusted with her. I don't see how any pupil can be as dull as she."

"I'll see what I can uncover," promised the psychologist. "I'll take her now if it's all right with you."

"You're more than welcome to have her," replied the teacher, "and if there is any chance of transferring her out of my room I'll be grateful to you."

It was the end of the school term. The school counselor brought in the list of student assignments for the coming school term and placed it on the teacher's desk. "Here is

the list of students assigned to you for the next school term," he explained.

The teacher quickly glanced over the list and then in a tearful tone complained, "Why do I rate the poorest students? Doesn't my seniority mean anything?"

"But you had the brighter section last year," the counselor reminded her.

"I certainly think my years of service should count for something," complained the teacher, completely ignoring the counselor's reminder.

Most readers, the writer is certain, either personally experienced similar reactions to those described above or undoubtedly heard similar ones expressed by some of their colleagues. The unfortunate part of such reactions of teachers is that oftentimes the below-average student is keenly cognizant of these reactions of the teacher. He detects it in the attitude of the teacher toward him and the way the teacher deals with him. Thus, the climate is created for the student and he reacts favorably or unfavorably in accordance with the climate established for him. His entire school experience will also be affected by the climate created by his teacher.

Let's take a closer look at this slow-learning or mentally deficient student, who can be most frustrating and tax our patience as he fails to meet our standards and expectations—this student whom we often wish we could foist on to someone else; this student whom we don't particularly care to have in the play or some other program because, well it would not make our room shine in front of an audience or be outstanding in the school.

This student was born into the world not of his own accord or will. He was endowed with a certain innate ability about which he had nothing to say. His parents noted early in the child's life that he was a little slower in doing things than the rest of the children in the family. The child often vexed his parents and taxed their patience because of his slow progress and failure to

respond quickly to their demands and expectations. Perhaps in many instances the parents would vent their feelings of disappointment in the child by mistreating him or attempting by means of force to get him to be like his brothers and sisters. Sometimes they might even reject him by showering their praises and attention on the other children while ignoring and belittling him. Frequently, in the presence of the child and visitors, they might compare him with his brothers and sisters as a means of lamenting their disappointment. Thus, early in his life this slow child recognized that somehow he did not fit into the scheme of things, that he was not accepted as others were accepted, and that he could not do things as well as others did them. As a defensive measure he began to develop an attitude of withdrawing or perhaps giving up or not making too much of an effort to accomplish anything because he knew from experience he had been a disappointment to others, and especially to those dearest to him. Some of these children when they begin school for the first time come with the feeling of indifference and little desire to put forth much effort because their experience up to this stage of their lives has been negative and unpleasant. The child from the beginning may be quite withdrawn and rather reluctant to participate in class activities because he seeks to avoid further disappointments, failure, condemnation, or rejection. Some may become belligerent or stubborn in order to focus the attention of the teacher away from their mental weakness and feeling of inferiority.

Under the kind guidance of the teacher who will accept this student for what he is and not attempt to fit him into somebody else's shoes, the student will begin to respond and cautiously let the barrier of indifference down. He will, however, be continually on the alert observing the facial expression and tone of voice of his teacher, as she refers to him or calls upon him to recite or perform some other function during

the classroom period or on the playground. He will note carefully whether the teacher shows less patience with him, as compared to that which she displays toward others. He will observe whether he is more sharply criticized and rebuked than are his classmates for his failure and inability to achieve academically. He will note whether he is passed over or ignored when parts for the play are assigned. He will note that he does not get called upon very often to recite. All of these things definitely affect the mentally deficient student. They shape his attitude and influence his behavior and feelings toward the school and toward life in general. Most teachers, if they are honest with themselves, will admit they either consciously or unconsciously display a difference in their feelings, treatment, and attitude between the so-called good student and the one who was not fortunate to be blessed with good native ability. This is a human tendency and it takes an exceptional person to be free of this bias.

Over the many years that I have been engaged in making up class assignments for teachers, I have received reactions and comments such as these:

"I hope you give me the good students."

"I hope you don't give me Mary S_____ and Johnny J_____."

"Couldn't you assign Charles to someone else. He will spoil the section because, as you know, he isn't a bright child."

"You sure are going to make this year an unpleasant one for me with the group you assigned me."

"What do you have against me because you assigned me the group you did?"

In view of these comments, could one logically forecast the kind of attitude the teacher may either consciously or unconsciously display toward the class or certain members of the class? Isn't it also logical to conclude that the students will detect readily the attitude and feeling of the teacher toward them and thus will govern their behavior and attitude accordingly? In addi-

tion to these reactions, some students will feel they are not wanted in school; thus they look ahead to the day when they can leave school. Some will even refuse to do any work in the classroom, which thus adds to the teacher's annoyance.

One of the most remarkable women the writer was fortunate to meet is a teacher of the retarded. She had taught regular classes for several years. She married and left the teaching profession. She became the mother of a child who it was soon discovered was born with a below-average mentality. The child, when it became of school age, was relegated to the retarded or special class.

"Because of the anguish I know many parents feel when they discover their child is not a child of average intelligence," this former teacher informed the writer, "and the great need for patience and understanding a slow-learning child needs, I decided to return to college and train to become a teacher for the retarded or mentally slow." Fortunate indeed is the slow child who has a teacher with the understanding and feeling of this teacher.

Surely, other teachers must have had experiences similar to those that the writer had with slow learners assigned to him when he began teaching years ago. Today, most of those children are good citizens in the community, holders of responsible jobs, and parents of children who are perfectly normal in every sense of the word. The writer, as well as many other teachers, learned many years ago never to sell a child short or underestimate his capabilities.

It is not my intent to nurture the thought that we must pamper and make life a bed of roses for the student who does not possess average ability or better. Neither do I infer that more consideration should be shown to the below-average student than to the others. Frankly, the below-average student doesn't want this. All he wants is to be treated with the same dignity and respect that the other students command. The below-average full well realizes his weakness

and doesn't have to be reminded. He realized before he entered school that things would not be easy for him and that he would experience difficulty in learning. As an individual, however, he deserves to be accorded the same courtesies, consideration, understanding, esteem, and respect as any other individual. When he is accorded these things, his entire attitudes and feelings toward the school, the teacher, and society will be influenced and molded into worthy and acceptable responses and standards of conduct. Is it unfair for the mentally deficient or below-average student to expect this from us? Don't we expect this for ourselves and for our own children? Surely, the parents who are unfortunate to have children who are lacking mentally want this for their children. They love their children and are just as concerned about their child's welfare, as are those more fortunate parents.

The students, including the slow learner or below-average student, sitting in our classrooms today, are the citizens of tomorrow. The attitudes and feelings which they are subjected to and eventually develop in our classrooms will be reflected in their behavior and attitudes as citizens. Thus, we in the schools have a serious challenge to display the proper attitude and feeling toward the mentally deficient individual so he in turn will feel kindly toward others and develop into the type of citizen our nation needs. Just as a chain is no stronger than its

weakest link, so is the nation no stronger than its weakest or poorest citizen.

Centuries ago the Great Teacher warned, "The poor always ye have with you." In like manner we can rest assured that we will always have the mentally deficient or below average student in our midst. This does not mean he can't learn anything or won't amount to anything worth while when he leaves our school. History is replete with examples of successful men and women who were so-called dull or below average in school. While the below-average student will experience difficulty grasping academic matter, he is quite capable of learning other important matters, such as respect for authority, obedience, truth, honesty, courtesy, working with others, sharing, taking turns, following instructions, living and getting along with others. Aren't these worth-while things for him to learn? Surely, society has a need and a place for individuals who have learned these traits and implement them in their everyday living. Employers particularly will desire to hire this type of person.

Centuries ago the Great Teacher also taught that those who would cast their bread upon the waters would have it returned to them manifold. In like manner, if we cast kindness and understanding on the below-average students, it will be returned years later in the form of a good citizen and a deep love and respect for his teacher and the school.

Slow Learners in a Speech Class

By THOMAS J. KRUPA

HAZEL PARK HIGH SCHOOL, HAZEL PARK, MICHIGAN

LAST FALL WHEN I WAS TOLD that I would be given five special education students in my speech class, I was hesitant and unsure about accepting them. However, before the semester was over I was both pleased and sorry about the experience—pleased, because

I had more success with them than I imagined I'd have, and sorry that they had not been assigned to my class earlier.

The speech class turned out to be a natural for this ambitious quintet, even though they were labeled as the "slow" and the

"retarded." They mixed and socialized so well with the group that before I knew it they "belonged" like old faces in a picture. A speech class gets at fear and anxiety in a hurry, but again I found that the special students were without fear and anxiety. Before long they were doing their assignments with the same care and attention that all of the others displayed. In fact, when doing some of the various assignments they showed a marked enthusiasm and interest, especially after they had been able to introduce themselves and their problem. The general attitude of the class was one of wholesome acceptance. There was something we had to watch here—a sort of Frank Laubach "Each One Teach One" situation. And only in America is this possible.

The regular classroom work was laid out for the group during the orientation period. They had to give some dramatic readings, group choral reading, breath control exercises, demonstrations, and impromptu speeches. The format for giving this work was both informal and formal, with some freedom for the group to show their individuality.

The special education students functioned on a comfortable level when they had the informal work to do, and they did commendable work when the emphasis was on informality. When they described experiences they had in which the five senses were involved, when they demonstrated the function or design of familiar objects or articles, when they repeated that which they had outlined on the board or projected, or when they gave pantomimes, or play-acted, or engaged in sociodramas or psychodramas, they showed superior performance in some instances.

In doing formal work with pitch, rate, inflections, tone, resonance, and so on, they again did surprisingly well. They were able to grasp the sounds, though with a little difficulty. Words were not used in part of the exercises; instead sounds were emphasized which would help to develop the power to

enunciate rapidly and properly. Some of these consisted of may-mee-my-mo-moo, tee-dee-tee-dee-dee, ip-it-ip-it-ip-it and others. As a result of their performance and their experience of success in this activity, it was obvious that they would adjust to the group without too much difficulty. The novelty of the sounds and the pleasure which the special students derived from the use of their speech mechanism meant that things were going well. Their self-concept was greatly enhanced, since this activity did not deal with meaning or comprehension, and because this was true they did not feel in any way threatened with failure.

All five of the special education students memorized the first twenty lines from Vachel Lindsay's "The Congo." They were happy with this assignment of a "sound" poem. Their interpretation of the poem in its entirety was good. When the choral reading assignment was made they were again anxious because the selection chosen was "The Creation," by James Weldon Johnson. Again, I feel that they had a good feeling about this work because it gave them another opportunity to achieve through activity. It seemed that they actually waited for the thrill of the sounds to come vibrating through their vocal cords. They enhanced the rhythm of these poems by beating with their hands against the covers of books.

In giving their impromptu speeches, they again did well. There even seemed to be a kind of competition involving them whenever they had to get up and talk. They had a personal desire to do better than the other fellow. One technique consisted of a flash card with one word or subject described on it. The student who drew the card then had to talk for not less than sixty seconds on the subject of the card. They liked this procedure.

When we dealt with more specific reports, they again distinguished themselves by talking freely and articulately about a variety of experiences that they had had in other

classes to which a regular special education teacher was assigned.

This opportunity to come to know the special education students who score low on various intelligence and aptitude tests but had a spark of their own kind of skill and

achievement to share, made me feel proud and humble. I learned that even beyond these sparkles and flashes of achievement they thought, felt, and in most cases, walked taller when the semester ended. And so did I.

Are We Too Objective?

By CLAYTON E. BUELL
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Is the teaching in junior high school too objective?

Good teachers feel that "both sides of the issue should be taught." They have felt that it was important that they take a "neutral position"—sometimes so neutral that their pupils couldn't tell what they were for or against. This has been called good teaching. And it is good teaching—under certain conditions. But is it overdone? To what degree does it apply to the junior high school?

It is true that many things should be taught through a negative approach. Understanding may well be taught by the logical development of a series of facts; and they may well be clinched by the presentation of the other side of the picture. Also physical skills may be refined by a limited demonstration of the "wrong way" to do them, showing resulting errors. Good safety habits may be developed when pupils see dramatic presentations of accidents that happen when safety is ignored. In these examples, the extent and depth of material presented on both sides depends upon the maturity, the background, and the understanding of the pupils. And pupils who are ready for such learning will not normally be harmed by an overdose.

Thus the objective approach may well be used with pupils who are mature enough, who have background enough to evaluate both sides, and who are thus able to make a wise decision.

But how do pupils learn moral values?

We provide many different activities to help them get proper attitudes. Pupils study about the heroes of our country, their high principles, and

their contributions. They study biography because through it they will absorb high values. The effectiveness of television in giving children standards—high or low, depending on the program—is well recognized. Our pupils absorb some of what they see day after day. Young children learn very quickly from others just how they are expected to act at children's Saturday matinees at the neighborhood theater; after the first half hour they are a part of it.

Through the junior-high-school years, pupils absorb the attitudes, values, and standards they see in people whom they admire. Even though it doesn't always show immediately, these impressions are deep and may become dominant in later years. At this age it is not sufficient to "present both sides" of the question—and sometimes it is very wrong to do so.

Something more is needed than an objective treatment of an idea. A love of democracy must be built up long before an understanding of various political systems and the superiority of our system is gradually developed. Teachers must not be neutral in these things! They must let pupils know how they feel. They must be enthusiastic about the important values in our democracy and equally contemptuous of low standards and low moral values.

Pupils need to have their socially acceptable beliefs reinforced by knowing that people they respect feel the same way. They have a right to know what their teachers thoroughly believe in.

They have a right to subjective teaching.

Observations on Cheating

By E. R. HARRINGTON

RECENTLY A POLL WAS TAKEN of school superintendents concerning their opinions on cheating by students. Sixty-eight per cent of the superintendents judge that cheating was NOT on the increase—perhaps was on the decline.

This poll interested me because I have studied under a number of different systems of giving examinations and homework and have encountered various ideas on the subject. I have been in high-school and college classes in which the teacher fretted himself into a dangerous mental state in a zealous desire to apprehend his students, whom he

apparently felt were all escapees from Sing Sing and Alcatraz. These two-for-a-nickel Sherlock Holmeses and Fearless Fosdicks couldn't have tracked an elephant through the snow but they fancied themselves real wits, though they were only half right. One such character seated us in alternate seats and alternate rows and paraded up and down the aisles like a Napoleon. Another assigned much homework and then informed us that this homework would count very little on the final grade since he figured that most of us were going to copy it from someone else anyway. Both of these characters were just personal affronts to their classes and the cheating went up in direct proportion to their monumental stupidity.

I have attended classes where the so-called "honor" system was supposedly in practice. In some it was a system designed to promote the old Adolf Hitler-Joe Stalin system of setting each individual to spy on every other one, with a halo placed on betrayal. In other places it was just a mixture of 10 per cent hope, a like per cent of indifference, and 80 per cent cynicism. I don't believe I ever worked under an honor system that was respected by either the students or the professors. Perhaps some institutions have a different sort of an honor system, I do not know. My own opinion comes from more than 600 semester hours of college work taken at seventeen colleges scattered from coast to coast and from the Canadian border to Old Mexico. I simply offer the opinion for whatever you think it is worth.

No real research can be done on cheating because one's statistics would be open to serious question and the researcher is almost surely "taken for a ride" once it is known what he is trying to find. I will not dignify my own venture into this field by calling it research but I should like to present to my

EDITOR'S NOTE

Well, sir, here is our lastest contribution on academic poaching. We think that it is good. Why? Because it has a different approach and because it is colorfully written.

The author writes that he is "eccentric" in the diversity of his educational preparation. He has B.S. and M.S. degrees in geology; B.S. and M.S. degrees in civil engineering; Ph.D. in physical chemistry; and M.A. in secondary education. He belongs to the New Mexico Education Association, the National Education Association, American Chemical Society, New Mexico Academy of Science (President, 1936) American Society of Civil Engineers, American Association for the Advancement of Science, and nine other professional associations. Wow! At present, he is director of secondary education, Albuquerque, New Mexico, and part-time lecturer for the National Science Foundation Academic Year Program at New Mexico Highlands University. He writes that CH is a good magazine even if we do not use his article. We liked the comment. We liked the article. Do you?

fellow teachers what I have found out on the subject and to state the conclusions that I draw from it. The investigations have covered thirty-five years of classroom teaching: high-school students, industrial apprentices, aviation cadets for the Armed Services, industrial journeyman workmen, engineers taking refresher courses, and college students, both undergraduate and graduate.

It all began a long time ago, back in 1924, when I decided I would catch some of my high-school students cheating on examinations. I gave them a multiple-choice test of fifty questions taking up the entire period. The same test went to three sections of the same subject so I had more than a hundred students or 100×50 items. The papers were handed in. That night I took each paper and looked it over, marking on a separate strip of paper the items missed by each student but making no marks on the student's paper. Next day I handed the papers back to the student, each student being assigned to grading his own paper. I read off the answers and they marked their own papers as we discussed the questions. Then they handed back the papers to me with the scores they had put down. That night I took *their* appraisal of their own work and *my* score made the night before and compared them. Out of 100 papers and 5,000 items I found a difference of about four check marks. That could have been the result of an accident, even by the teacher!

I did not know how to explain this. Over the years I tried the same system again and again but always with the same results. About the third year of my teaching it suddenly dawned on me that my high-school students were a pretty honest bunch of kids who were not greatly concerned about taking care of themselves by juggling their own marks. I felt a little ashamed of my original suspicions and did my best to excuse them on the basis of my inexperience. However, over the years I continued to do some investigating of this sort, more as a renewal of my faith than anything else.

I tried other things: sending sets of examination questions home to a sick student who had friends in the same class, friends who had already taken the examination; leaving a student alone in the classroom taking an examination with my "key" right on top the desk fifteen feet away; seating students at a table and there giving the "hot" student of the crowd a set of questions exactly like all others, except with the answers scrambled so as to necessitate the use of a new key. Always I came up with the same thing: definite indications that the high-school student was willing enough to sink or swim by his own efforts. Never did I operate on an honor system. The extent of my admonitions was limited to this statement given at the beginning of the first examination: "We want your own work on all examinations and assignments. You will live with yourself all your life so learn to rely on yourself. Your classmate may be very good in this subject but you cannot depend on him the rest of your life, so become independent of him right now."

I hesitate to degrade something of this sort by calling it an honor system; it lacks the hot air and the cynical distrust that usually accompany systems of this sort. It has worked too well for me to place it in the same category with an espionage system. It has brought me an abiding faith in the honesty of secondary-school students in their work with me and all without the slightest hint of a police state.

So I tried this on my adult students: undergraduates and graduates; apprentices and journeymen; flying cadets and engineers; adults in noncredit and credit courses. Things have changed somewhat here. One gets many alterations with adults, particularly when dealing with men and women in the graduate school! This conclusion is inescapable; it is so clearly defined. I got so I asked the students to put down the honorary scholastic fraternities to which they belonged. I soon found out that the greatest skill in altering answers to correspond with

the key is found among members of Phi Beta Kappa, Sigma Xi, and Phi Kappa Phi. In one course I had seven holders of the Ph.D. in physics; oh boy! what those men could do with their own paper!

This was all a source of amusement to me. I never came before the class beating my chest, roaring like a lion in my indignation. To start with I was not indignant about it anyway. Those adults felt that the "chips were down" and they had to produce and so the fine points of honesty became casualties to need. Those aviation cadets had to have success in their course or they became apprentice seamen in the United States Navy, dodging the Japanese fleet in the Pacific in 1943; this was not good duty. Honesty was all right but here a person could die if he practiced it! Those apprentice workmen and the journeymen were on the job supporting families; too many mistakes might mean food, clothing, and the future for their children. Honesty might be priced too highly. The graduate students "had to get a B" to stay in the graduate program and they were taking no chances, nor were they overlooking any opportunities. The members of honorary scholastic societies felt the same "heat," only more of it.

And so over the thirty-five years of investigation I have come to the conclusion that one will get different reactions from adults than one will from teen-agers as far as examinations are concerned. I would go so far as to state that honesty among teen-agers is

the rule with but few exceptions, and if a person has great difficulty with cheating in his class he is probably creating most of the difficulty himself. He can produce cheating by assignments so difficult that the student will have to cut corners to get them; by orating and voicing a cluster of threats against the students. If he fancies himself a world-beater on catching the culprit, he has "had it," as they will just show him how much smarter they are than he is.

Codes of morals and codes of action must be codes that the buyer can afford. If they are priced too high, they will not be sold. I do not believe that the honesty of adults has deteriorated since they were teen-agers. It is just that as adults the "chips are down" and they may not be able to afford the small niceties of personal examination honor that the same individuals would have practiced in their youth.

I believe that cheating is much less prevalent in secondary schools than the superintendents think, and than I thought back in those years of the middle 1920's when I was a superintendent myself. I would suggest that the teachers who are so frustrated concerning cheating would do well to throw away their Sherlock Holmes caps and their junior G-Man badges, and concentrate on putting a little more interest into their subject matter and a little more planning into making assignments which are possible. Their ulcers will improve and so will their instructional program.

◆

The essence of good teaching is not to protect the student from exposure of inadequacies, learning, and change but to create supportive conditions enabling the individual to undergo the process of learning, to handle his anxieties and concerns, to experiment with new ways of thinking and behaving. The important point is that *the teacher alone cannot supply all of the support necessary for all students*, particularly when the classroom climate itself creates more stress for the individual.—LELAND P. BRADFORD in *Teachers College Record*.

EVENTS AND OPINIONS

MORE THAN DRIVING A SCHOOL BUS: "Sometimes the driver gets out of his pigpen and right into the bus. Other times an auto mechanic will crawl out from under a car and get behind the wheel of a bus without cleaning up." These descriptive remarks were uttered by State Police Sergeant John Doyle, who "grades" those men who drive school buses in the rural areas of central New Jersey. Doyle is of the opinion that much can be done to improve the appearance, conduct, and general attitude of school bus drivers, even though handling a school bus may be a part-time job to most of them.

A three-point program directed toward the bus driver who is "between the school and the home and is not directly governed by either end" has been suggested:

Personal appearance: Drivers should be clean shaven, have hair combed and wear neat, clean clothing, preferably a uniform.

Attitude: Drivers should show proper attitude toward school and students, never use profane language, keep opinions to themselves, and always respect the law.

Personality: Drivers should be mannerly, have control of bus and children at all times, avoid personal contact with children, and show no favoritism.

THE HIGH COST OF MEDIOCRITY: When mediocrity teaches, mediocrity also graduates. But when strength and self-confidence teach, the graduates have both knowledge and the power to apply it. This tersely expresses the feelings of Dr. David Goodman, psychologist, who laments the massive mediocrity which marks the teaching profession today. What, then, has caused this professional degeneration? Goodman places the blame on two simple things: inadequate salaries and lack of respect for the teacher in the community.

As a result, many of the competent teachers have left the classrooms and the top-quarter high-school graduates scorn the thought of becoming teachers. And what is worst of all, many incompetents have entrenched themselves in the schools through the tenure laws, and now dynamite cannot move them.

The great value of having strong, self-confident people in teaching, according to Dr. Goodman, is that such types are not prone to criticism and blame which are so destructive of the children's personalities. Feeling adequate within themselves, they have no need for ego compensation at the expense of the children. The well-adjusted teachers possess an instinct for courtesy and appreciation which the pupil immediately senses and is stimulated to do his best.

However, teachers who suffer from ego distresses (and many do because of the community's failure to appreciate their services) are now driven to take out their griefs on the children. They berate and belittle all the time. The children feel depressed and ashamed and they lack a motive to try harder. Many an American child gets nothing out of school but a great big inferiority complex.

We in education cannot deny that the charges made by Dr. Goodman do not exist. They do. And we cannot beg the issue that mentally harassed teachers are greatly counterbalanced by the strong, self-confident educators. In our business one good teacher does not serve as an antidote for a poor one. Our problem is to remove those circumstances which produce poor teachers. And there lies the rub. How? Dr. Goodman suggests that the American parent should agree not only to pay the teachers better but also to lift his sights spiritually so as to give the teacher the regard and honor which are his due.

A NOTED TEXTBOOK WRITER: Mr. Truman recently disclosed the fact that he is preparing a textbook on the history of the presidency in the United States. This text will be in line with lectures he has made throughout the country and to student groups at the Truman Library in his home town of Independence, Missouri, and will be written for an age level ranging from high-school juniors to college juniors. "After a fellow gets to be a senior in college you can't teach him anything," the former president jested.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS BOOMING: Americans in increasing numbers are turning to private schools for the education of their children.

The student enrollment in non-Catholic private elementary and secondary schools has increased 600 per cent since the end of World War II, according to statistical records of the United States Office of Education. During the same period, Catholic school enrollment has increased 110 per cent and public school enrollment 68 per cent.

Several factors indicate the cause of this dramatic shift in popular attitudes toward private schools.

1. The overcrowding of public and parochial schools in many communities. The relatively low teacher-student ratios that prevail in private schools are a strong attraction to parents whose children have been placed on split-shift schedules, or in classes with thirty-five, forty, or more students.

2. A belief that private schools do a better job of teaching basic subjects.

3. The "must-get-him-into-a-good-college" complex which seizes ambitious parents who are convinced that graduation from a "prestige" private school is a passport to a "big-name" college.

4. Actual or impending racial integration of public schools, which has resulted in the establishment of a large number of new private schools in the south.

5. That sending a child to a private school has "status symbol" value for some parents who are moving up the social ladder.

6. A desire to have children educated in a religiously oriented environment. The motive has been strengthened in recent years by the increasing tendency of the courts to ban Bible reading, prayers, or other religious exercises from public schools.

HOW TO INFLUENCE PARENTS: "It Starts in the Classroom" is a 64-page advisory to educators suggesting how to get a better public image. This booklet has been distributed by the New Jersey State Department of Education to almost 2,000 public schools and faculty members and emphasizes that better public relations begins in the classroom and extends to parents.

It lists eighteen words that should never be used in referring to children. They include "dirty," "cheat," "thief," "nuisance," "dumb," and "worthless."

To avoid emotionally colored words in reports to parents, teachers should exercise careful thought, according to the booklet. Instead of saying, "John is a liar," it might be more pleasant for a parent to hear: "When involved in trouble, John often fails to tell the truth."

Among the verbal bombs dropped on the teaching profession are these comments from the public: "Teaching is the only profession that pays a year's salary for 170 or 180 days of work," and "Anyone can teach who has read a few pages ahead of his pupils." The techniques to meet these criticisms are best performed by local teachers associations, says the report.

Understanding is the chief aim of the pamphlet. Perhaps this may be true. But we feel this desired understanding can be achieved if the teacher remembers to use something which he purports to possess: *common sense*.

JOSEPH GREEN

Experiment in + and -

By GERTRUDE R. CONNER

HAVE YOU NOT FELT, while so carefully and earnestly reviewing returned quiz or test papers with a class, that the students were more concerned with searching for errors made in grading than in giving full attention to the review? I have! Have you not felt, too, that your efforts to create a learning situation with such a review have fallen on deaf ears? I have! Do you enjoy being thwarted by students quibbling over one one-hundredth of a point? I do not!

Careful explanation of returned test papers can and should be a most worthy teaching device. Consequently, to get a student's undivided attention, to try to remove overemphasis on a grade merely for the grade's sake, and to rid myself of some measure of heckling, I have tried the following method of grading in my Latin classes. *Nihil sub sole novum.* While I consider the experiment original, it may have been tried before. At any rate, it is worth sharing.

I meticulously grade tests and quizzes; yet I put no mark on an individual paper other than a + or a -. The + may be any grade from 70 (that is the passing grade in my school) to a 100; the - may be 69 or 0. While grading a paper, I enter on a separate grading sheet the student's name and notations of each mistake made. A numerical or letter grade is recorded only in my

grade book. I then return the test. Each question is thoroughly explained—often I write words and phrases on the blackboard as a visual aid in spelling, in use of long marks, and so on. Since there is no indication on his paper as to what is right or wrong, the student must listen attentively to learn and to correct any errors he may have made. Once the review is completed, and only then, do I announce values attached to the various questions. Then a student can determine his own grade.

I collect and keep on file each student's test papers, together with his grading sheet. This is not only a protection for me—parents invariably ask, "How can I help? Where is he weak?" My grading sheet and test papers corrected in pencil by each student himself are accurate indicators. But such a procedure is also a check on my initial grading. If the student's grade does not coincide with my own, again my grading sheet is an invaluable help.

Before embarking on this system of checking papers, I explain it carefully—how it works and what its purpose is—and I try to impress classes with the fact that a grade in itself means nothing unless it is indicative of what has been learned. The idea has worked well for me. With undivided attention given to reviewing test papers, grades have improved for almost every student. With few exceptions the emphasis has gradually been transferred from a grade to the learning of Latin. With such an attitude, both learning and grades have shown improvement.

Are you wondering if students do not change answers? I believe I have provided for such a contingency by requiring all tests to be in ink. I do not accept scratched out work. Ink erasers must be used. In check-

EDITOR'S NOTE

This little piece describes how students review their own quiz and test papers and thereby reinforce their own learning. The subject, as you will discover, is Latin. The author is quite naturally a teacher of Latin at Alamo Heights High School, San Antonio, Texas.

ing his own paper during my review, each student makes corrections in pencil. So by keeping my grading sheets with notations of each student's mistakes, I have not discovered one attempt to change an answer.

If any one of you has been thwarted by students unhappy over grades, if the quibblers have hounded you over a fraction of a point, this suggestion is at least worth a try.

Sell Yourself

By DONALD H. DEMEULES

Glencoe, Minnesota

A friend who is a salesman for a large pharmaceutical company once told me that before he could sell his products he had to sell himself to the prospective customer. This philosophy could also be applied in teaching, where we attempt to sell our product—education. The average high-school student wants to feel that the teacher is interested in him as an individual. There are various ways in which a teacher can show his interest in his pupils.

For instance, during the first week of the school year, have each student fill out a questionnaire that will give you information as to his personal life. The occupation of the father and mother, the student's birth date, his hobbies, and his aim in life are only a few of the questions that will give you insight as to the student's background. On a spare calendar, make a note of each student's birthday. On that day either send a card or give verbal good wishes. Students who have birthdays during vacation periods should also be sent cards. Youngsters at this stage of life are pleased to be growing up, and the teacher's thinking of their birthdays will make a great impression on them. However, in selecting cards be sure that the written message is simple and appropriate.

Athletics, whether we approve or not, are very important in the eyes of our pupils. The teacher should attend every event that it is possible to reach. Most students are very much aware which teachers attend the various games. But do not stop with merely attending athletic events. When next you see a player, make a comment about the game as a whole or about some good point in the individual's playing. If you have some spare bulletin-board space, place on it the newspaper accounts of the events. Many worth-while class discussions can result from such material.

Try to write some comment on every paper that is returned to the students. These comments need not be long paens of praise. The word "good" written on a paper will be appreciated by the student. This was brought home to me last year when Paul, who had finally decided to work, came up to my desk after some spelling papers had been returned and wanted to know why nothing had been written on his perfect paper. This incident made it obvious to me that a teacher, no matter how busy, could not afford to omit something as important as this. Any improvement that a student shows should be worthy of praise.

Home-Room Guidance Reborn

By GORDON E. BUCHER

Background

A QUARTER-CENTURY AGO it was not uncommon to find genuine programs of home-room guidance. In our schools this program was regarded as basic to the functioning of the school and for the instruction of students. While a number of good group guidance programs are found in our schools today, true programs of home-room guidance are not common. Yet guidance, along with instruction, is the most important responsibility of the school. Only with competent and systematic guidance can our students make sound educational plans, set for themselves correct vocational goals, develop worthy personal objectives, make satisfactory progress, and learn to make those social adjustments which will lead to successful living.

Trends

The home room has been usually the center of guidance activities in the junior

high school; however, practices have varied a good deal from school to school. Not only has there been a variance in the number of periods per week but in the length of the periods used for guidance. In spite of this variance, however, the trend has been toward more periods a week, rather than fewer, and toward a period of medium length.

A number of schools have set up their home-room programs with the primary purpose of guidance in mind; yet they have not developed it as planned. They have used it often for activities, administrative announcements, attendance taking, transaction of student and school business, and study.

The core curriculum, which has been adopted by a number of junior high schools, has as one of its purposes to integrate home-room activities into the school program; however, there are those who feel that the core was a trend away from the home room. In addition, some reports on the core program have indicated that they are not so effective as intended in performing guidance functions.

In any event, reasons for the lack of effectiveness of home-room programs have been given as lack of time, failure to understand the purpose of the home room, indifference of teachers to the home room, lack of trained personnel, and inadequate program planning. In all probability, the answer, in a large measure, can be found in the type of program one has in mind, the planning done, and the techniques used.

Purpose and Need

In an attempt by some schools to educate their youngsters better, one concept of guidance has been to obtain more counselors and specialists to carry on the guidance activities. Certainly we recognize the value

EDITOR'S NOTE

For years and years, the home room has been acknowledged as one of the weakest links in the chain of secondary education. The reason is not hard to find: most teachers do not work so diligently with their home room as they do with their subject classes. Yet the home room has persisted as an administrative and attendance-taking device.

Here is an account of a principal and staff who really are trying to make the device of the home room come alive as a guidance period. We say that it's good news. The author is the principal of the junior high school, Pleasantville, New York. By the way, did you know that the home room is an American institution? It exists in no other national system of secondary education!

and importance of well-trained counselors and specialists and the fine work they are doing, but in the schools where this concept is practiced, are they not losing something essential in good teaching? "There is a temptation in current educational thinking to conceive of guidance in the elementary school as a stepped-down version of guidance in the secondary school. However, there is sharp contrast between secondary and elementary schools in the developmental needs of students . . . and . . . in the character of the relationship between teacher and student."¹ The work of the counselor and the specialist augments and supplements rather than replaces the help given by the teacher. The ultimate goal of both is the same, namely, to help the pupil secure the most from his school experience. The school counselor and the specialist are the support of the teacher at the point where individual pupils show need for special understanding and help. Neither can do the other's job. Together they can do much to make the school experience a positive, constructive one for all students. Good teaching, in itself, is good guidance. Specialists could not succeed without the active co-operation of the teacher—the teacher who is intimately and directly involved in all guidance activities of the students. Predicated on the point of view that guidance is one of the essential ingredients in good teaching, much more effective teaching is possible with a thorough knowledge and understanding of the guidance needs of pupils. It can be effective when teachers develop a full awareness and acceptance of their guidance responsibilities.

Especially at the junior-high level is there a growing need for a rebirth of genuine programs of home-room guidance. One of the important stated purposes of the junior high school is that of articulation; that is, "to provide a gradual transition from pre-

adolescent education to an educational program suited to the needs and interests of adolescent boys and girls."² With more emphasis being placed on better academic training and better adjustment to school life, due to the highly competitive structure of college admissions, there is even more need today to give attention to "bridging the gap." The change from a one-teacher classroom to a departmentalized program, the physical and mental development of boys and girls at this age, and the emotional and psychological characteristics of their make-up, emphasize the need for continuing attention in this time of tension and rapid change. The home room provides an excellent place for both individual and group guidance. It can help prepare students for better academic training and assist the student in better adjustment to school life. It can be a significant force for shaping the lives of pupils.

Organization

A program of home-room guidance was launched in Pleasantville Junior High School in a workshop in the summer of 1959. Means were devised to give more help to junior-high students during this transitional period. After the initial research had been performed by the principal, the major objectives and ways to implement the program were set forth. The program was divided broadly into four basic areas of guidance: (1) orientation; (2) educational adjustment; (3) personal and social guidance; and (4) vocational guidance.

The program included *all* pupils in the seventh and eighth grades. One period of forty-five minutes weekly, in addition to the regular twenty-five-minute period at the beginning of each day, was used for this purpose. The twenty-five-minute period is intended mainly for individual guidance while the forty-five-minute period is pri-

¹C. Gilbert Wrenn, "Guidance: an Overview," *NEA Journal*, 48:17 (January, 1959).

² William T. Gruhn and Harl R. Douglass, *The Modern Junior High School* (New York: Ronald Press Co., 1947), p. 60.

marily group guidance. The forty-five-minute home room was closed to all other activities and was not to be used as a study period. The program was to be directed by the principal and a committee on guidance. Functions and responsibilities of the principal, the guidance director, the guidance counselor, and the home-room teacher, were outlined. Students in home rooms were grouped heterogeneously, even though classes were grouped on an ability-achievement basis. Home rooms were to be organized at the beginning of the year and students given an overview of the year's program. A comprehensive program of guidance activities was to be conducted by the home-room teachers. All would work within a framework of recommended topics and be responsible for certain major areas. The topics would depend on the developmental level, interests, and experiences of the pupils. The home-room teachers would be afforded wide latitude in their approach, permitting flexibility and utilization of their creative abilities. Lesson guides were to be prepared for the entire year with all resources and materials being made available for use by the home-room teacher. Various suggested activities were proposed for each lesson topic. The teacher could utilize one of the many suggested activities as his approach to the lesson or deviate to an activity of his own choice.

At both grade levels, lessons emphasize character, personality development, and citizenship training. In the seventh grade, guidance lessons are concerned with orientation to the junior high school, personality development, school problems, home and family life, social and economic problems, health and physical development, and study habits. Particular emphasis is placed on learning how to study, with periodic evaluation of pupil progress. The eighth-grade program is directed particularly toward vocational and educational planning. In addition, it covers the same general range of topics as the seventh-grade program.

Evaluation

Teacher and student evaluation of the program constantly takes place. The second workshop was conducted last summer (1960) in order to re-evaluate and revise the program. New ideas were submitted and explored for use in the coming year.³ Lesson guides and suggested activities were prepared for several new topics which had been proposed by the teachers and students. Audio-visual materials were selected for use during the year. The committee on guidance met periodically to evaluate the effectiveness and success of the program and to find ways to improve it. In May, a student evaluation of the program was made by use of a questionnaire which was completed by all students in the seventh and eighth grade. The questionnaire was designed to obtain student opinion on four questions:

- (1) Had they been helped personally by the program? If so, in what specific ways?
- (2) In what specific ways could they have been helped to a greater degree?
- (3) In what specific ways would they improve the program?
- (4) Had they been helped in the *seventeen* specific objectives of the program? Listed 1-17.

Over 80 per cent of the students indicated that they had been helped personally by the program. Sixty per cent of the students felt they had been helped specifically in developing better study habits which, in turn, helped them to achieve better academically. More than 80 per cent of the students stated that they understood and accepted their responsibilities and obligations better as a result of the program. Likewise,

³ Under the National Defense Education Act, Title V, a project of group guidance was undertaken in our senior high school to learn through the media of audio-visual aids and written materials: (1) what is required of people in various vocations to understand their problems and the opportunities for advancement in order to make a wise vocational selection, and (2) to help students do a better job of defining and pursuing their educational careers toward the search for happiness and success in the world of work. It may be feasible to introduce part of this program in the junior high school at the eighth-grade level.

over 80 per cent of the students reported that they understood themselves and others better. Twenty per cent of the students who did not answer in an affirmative way to the first question responded positively to more than 60 per cent of the seventeen specific objectives in the fourth question. Only six students in the entire student body answered negatively to the questionnaire. One of the important aspects of the tabulation showed that a greater percentage of seventh graders responded affirmatively to the specific items of help in the fourth question than did eighth graders. This might indicate that the program made a deeper impression on seventh graders than on the more mature eighth graders who did not have the opportunity of the program while they were seventh graders. The seventh graders indicated strongly that they had been helped by the program to understand and accept their responsibilities and obligations better.

Large numbers of eighth graders felt that they had been helped in understanding more about educational and vocational opportunities and therefore assisted to a great degree in planning for their educational future, especially in high school. The large number of favorable responses to the questionnaire would seem to indicate that there was strength in the "specifics" of the program and that the job was done effectively by the home-room teachers. The program appeared to be excellent for teaching general habits of study, and it is possible that this aim can be accomplished more successfully if augmented by more detailed and specific help by the teachers in the various subject areas.

The teachers' evaluation, obtained from several meetings with them, produced some findings which seem to confirm similar results as that of student opinion. The following statements expressed by the chairmen of the seventh- and eighth-grade teachers give a clue to the effectiveness and success of the program:

It is a worth-while program, depending largely for success or failure on the enthusiasm and rapport of each teacher with the group.

The need for the establishment of an atmosphere of genuine concern for youngsters through a continuing awareness of their problems is paramount.

The teachers agreed unanimously that the program definitely aids in the functioning of the school; that it promotes common agreement on school procedures; and that it acts in many ways as an information center. A high correlation existed between their opinion and the fact that 80 per cent of the students felt they were helped in understanding and accepting better the rules, regulations, and policies of the school, and, in the same manner, the school standards of academic effort and citizenship. They felt it promoted student acceptance of their responsibilities. More students had perfect attendance records than in the previous year—in fact, 12 per cent of the total school enrollment had perfect attendance records. The average daily attendance was 96 per cent compared to 93 per cent a year before. There is some evidence that fewer students had less difficulty in meeting the academic standards of the school than in the previous year when the home-room guidance program was nonexistent. Not only were there fewer reports of unsatisfactory work sent to parents but a slightly higher scholastic average was maintained by the students. Twice the number of students maintained "academic excellence" throughout the year as in the school year 1958-59. ("Academic excellence" denotes the achievement of 90 per cent or over.)

The teachers believed that the program was effective in promoting good relations between teacher and pupil, in developing a stronger home room, and in strengthening democratic processes. Evidence from the student questionnaire was inconclusive in the matter of promoting better teacher-pupil relationships; however, a number of students commented that they understood their teachers better as a result of the program.

Home-room morale was excellent. Indeed, there was a strong enthusiasm and interest developed for the home room. Participation in home-room activities was at an all time high.

Over 90 per cent of the students participated in some way in the voluntary intramural program organized on a home-room basis. Attendance at intramural contests was much higher than before. In addition, there appeared to be a stronger feeling of concern for one another and one another's problems. The strengthening of democratic processes was demonstrated in many ways. Student and teacher interest and participation in the entire school program was at a high level. Some students even wanted to keep minutes of their home-room guidance meetings. Ability-achievement grouping became less controversial and more readily accepted by the students and also by the parents. (The ability-achievement grouping system had been inaugurated in 1958-59.)

The home room provided a good basis for student government. Home rooms were organized in a democratic way. The arrangement contributed greatly toward maintaining a wholesome democratic relationship among all pupils in the school, and developed an understanding between students of different kinds of ability and social backgrounds.

Possibilities

The possibilities of such a program are almost unlimited. It provides a teamwork atmosphere for both pupils and teachers. It helps the student to understand and to appraise his abilities with constant attention to the task at hand. It enables him to recognize his interests and the significance of values. It helps him to learn how to make decisions for himself, assisting him toward better living. The program stimulates active teacher and pupil participation, and it is excellent preparation for senior-high-school and adult living. Working on such a program gives the teacher valuable experience in planning. Most important, it gives her a deeper understanding and appreciation of the pupil and his problems. It not only helps in the identification of problems but in the solution of both individual and group problems. With it, many potential problems fail to develop. It is a program which strengthens public relations. Through it the students and parents understand better the purposes of the school and the educational program. Plans are currently under way so that a central theme might be undertaken each year to supplement the regular program and be centered around a specific problem toward which school effort might be directed. The potential of such a program of home-room guidance of this type is indeed boundless.



Labelism

Like teachers, like schools. Examine the latest wave of anti-school propaganda. Much of it pounds at the theme of "a beautiful school on the outside, but . . ."

What sort of labelistic thinking would lead one to expect that a beautiful school would lead to a beautiful education?

The labelists, fooled and therefore enraged at the trickery of educators, attack all schools—except those in other countries. The thoughtful lay ob-

server of education can hardly be heard for the uproar.

The snap judges and banner wavers within education return the fire with labels like "enemy of public education." Anyone who suggests practical remedies for school problems gets blasted, unless of course he suggests higher salaries. We all like the sound of that, but we haven't the time to find out which observer is calling for the biggest raise for us.—IAN BRALEY in *Phi Delta Kappan*.

Educational Value of a Centennial

By GENEVIEVE R. MACDOUGALL

THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY of the first public school in Winnetka, Illinois, was observed by a community-wide yearlong celebration with the schools playing a leading role in the activities. Sponsored by twenty-five civic organizations of this Chicago suburb, the village board of education, and the Winnetka Historical Society, the centennial paid tribute to education in Winnetka.

Three years before the centennial year, a Winnetka resident, Mrs. Lora Townsend Dickinson, wrote "*The Story of Winnetka*," (Winnetka Historical Society, 1956) in which the date of the first public school was mentioned. In discussing the book one evening, Mrs. Dickinson, Dr. S. P. Marland, Jr., superintendent of Winnetka public schools, Miss Marion Russell, a Winnetka teacher, and Lloyd Faxon, President of the Winnetka Historical Society, conceived the idea of a centennial celebration which would be an educational venture rather than a carnival or home-coming as is traditional.

Not long afterwards a central committee was formed with village-wide representation and support. Cochairmen of this committee were chosen by the board of education and the historical society. There was also a faculty committee which worked with Dr. Mar-

land in adapting the school's curriculum to the anniversary's plans.

Winnetka was turned upside down by students looking for information about the village's past. Although the emphasis of the centennial was on schooling, students found many side interests in the 100-year cycle of time: the increase in value in real estate, the changes in the village government, the growth of the suburb. The youngsters deciphered tombstones to trace genealogies of Winnetka's first families. Seventh graders canvassed housewives to find 100-year-old recipes to include in their book, *Way Back When*. Under persistent pressure from hundreds of school children, residents delved into attics, trunks, and chests to look for old diaries, Bibles, pictures, letters, and small mementos of the past: music boxes, old dishes and utensils, a collection of boys' toys, an assortment of old Christmas cards and valentines.

These items had historical significance. All of them were brought to school for display purposes. Many of them became models for use in creative art classes.

Winnetka collectors loaned their treasures for exhibits. Local historians, among them Mrs. Dickinson, were interviewed by students for facts about Winnetka's past.

Although the centennial month was April, 1959, numerous events throughout the entire year called attention to the anniversary. In the schools were the bulletin boards, the murals, and the displays. In the local restaurants and in numerous homes, citizens ate from centennial plates. Old time residents were on constant call to speak to groups about their recollections of early Winnetka. In rehearsal during the months preceding April, 1959, was the play, *Snow Job*, a musical comedy about pioneering in education, written and produced by a local

EDITOR'S NOTE

Proof that our country is still young is observed in the kinds of anniversaries we celebrate. Here is a town 100 years young. We say young because of the enthusiastic co-operation between youth and adults of the community in behalf of the anniversary celebration. And the schools played a vibrant role in this enterprise. That's what this article is about. The author teaches English and social studies in Skokie Junior High School, Winnetka, Illinois.

theater group. Its premiere was in the junior-high-school auditorium.

The creation of a Winnetka Centennial Fellowship Fund for Teachers was part of the over-all centennial plans. Proceeds from the adult play *Snow Job*, from the sale of the centennial plates, and from the sale of the book, *Way Back When*, written by two seventh-grade English and social studies classes, were put into this fund. The fund makes grants to Winnetka's public, private, and parochial schoolteachers for special study projects.

Planned as the culmination of the centennial celebration was a public symposium on April 6, 1959, at which representatives of the suburb's public, private, and parochial schools—three former superintendents and five of the present school administrators—reviewed the history of Winnetka's schools.

Not all of the centennial's activities were at such a high level. There was fun too for the students. There were old-fashioned Christmas tree raisings, sleigh rides, box-lunch suppers, a sugaring-off party during the snowy weather, candle- and jelly-making, and rug weaving. There was even school taught in the traditions of 1859. At Greeley School, one of the elementary schools in Winnetka, an 1859 classroom was set up. Frederick Reed, principal, became headmaster and gave each grade a sample of 1859 teaching. Old-style benches served as desks. On the walls were maps of the time and a flag containing the thirty-four stars of the thirty-four states then in the Union. Students used reprints of McGuffey Readers and homemade copybooks as their textbooks. The 1859 teaching was used in other schools to the delight of the pupils. The day one sixth-grade teacher recreated an 1859 classroom, his pupils "dressed up" in the clothes of the period.

Disciplinary methods as well as teaching techniques of 100 years ago were demonstrated in one seventh-grade class. Two boys, primed beforehand, of course, landed on the corner stools under dunce's caps. An-

other who at recitation time did not "toe the (chalk) line," as demanded by the school marm, got a whacking on his knees with an authentic hickory stick.

Students took their reading and spelling lessons from McGuffey Readers, their geography lesson from *Modern Geography*, published in 1853 by Pratt, Woodford and Company, and their arithmetic problems from *Progressive Intellectual Arithmetic*, 1859 (publisher and author unknown). The teacher had to decipher the arithmetic terms of shilling and pence for the students. One hundred years ago many foreign coins were in circulation in the United States and the arithmetic problems of that day contained such terms.

Modern Winnetka was not neglected in the centennial writings. Students wrote on the history of the village government, on the sewage system, its transportation system, the distribution of its tax dollar, the operation of the caucus committee and the growth of population in the suburb. Of enduring value was a Winnetka tour booklet written by an eighth-grade class. The several tours described in the pamphlet are a complete guide to Winnetka's historical places. The students wrote brief historical descriptions of each place.

The centennial celebration provided many opportunities for creative and worth-while learning activities. It did more than that, however. The Winnetka Historical Society is richer in resource material because of the scavenger activities of students. The Fellowship Fund for Teachers is a tangible remembrance. Moreover, the history the students absorbed cannot be overlooked.

The annual report published by the Winnetka Board of Education and distributed to every householder in September, 1959, says: "It is not possible to record here even a small fraction of the instructional program that grew out of the centennial idea. Further, the many subtle changes in the attitudes of pupils toward citizenship, toward a meaningful grasp of time and his-

tory, toward their own views of themselves ultimately as working citizens, do not lend themselves to description and illumination in the written record. We cannot in all honesty claim that our pupils are wiser and better people for this year, but adults who

observed pupil activities on the subject during the year (and there were a great many) came away often with a new pride and new insights themselves. Your Board has been deeply impressed with the depth and quality of the teaching and learning."



The Administrative Interne

The internship in administration is challenge and a rewarding experience. It challenges us to integrate theory with practice and rewards us by letting us observe experienced administrators in action. The internship lets us broaden our horizons and gain personal assurance in tailor-made situations.

It also gives us a comprehensive view of administration and permits us to focus on the ingredients that make the sponsoring administrator a good democratic leader.

These are the areas in which we work with the sponsoring administrator: instructional improvement, pupil progress, instructional materials, pupil personnel services, personnel supervision, scheduling, budgeting, staff relations, public relations, transportation, plant maintenance, supply and equipment distribution, instructional and organizational evaluation, reporting, planning, and activity and extracurricular programs. In interne seminars we examine problems of mutual concern and formulate guidelines for action in analogous situations.

Through greater interaction with professionals and laymen we can develop human

relation skills and gain new insights into group dynamics. From the relative safety of the internship position we can also observe the sponsoring administrator's skill in working with the public and his adroitness in building relationships with his colleagues.

Carrying real administrative responsibility gives the interne a chance to integrate theory with practice under guidance. Professional growth is fostered by encouraging the interne to undertake major projects on his own which will benefit the school situation.

Unfortunate decisions carry little onus and serve as guides in future situations. The interne learns through experiences made more meaningful by the personal interest of his sponsor and college co-ordinator.

The internship is a tripartite investment. All parties to the agreement—interne, school system, and college—have much to gain from a successful program. But the ultimate gain will accrue to the profession and the public as the quality of educational administrators is enhanced.—JOEL ELKIND in *Overview*.

Should We Start Each Day of School with a Prayer?

By
ALLEN BERGER

AT THE RISK OF APPEARING IRRELIGIOUS and perhaps unpatriotic, I am suggesting that we take another look at the practice common in many schools of beginning each day with a prayer. For there is a strong possibility that, through these prayers, we actually may be performing a disservice to our children. My concern has nothing to do with the separation of church and schools. It simply stems from the possibility that the practice of starting each day with a prayer may have neither a beneficial nor even a neutral effect on most of the children; indeed, the practice may actually have a detrimental effect.

Most school systems involved in this practice have a nondenominational prayer similar to the one that follows:

Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee and we beg Thy blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers, and our country.

Admittedly the ideas in the prayer are wonderful and, from a cursory examination, the whole practice appears beneficial. But

let us examine the practice more closely as it is actually put into effect.

The children come into the school building bursting with pep and energy. Unless they are not healthy, they are probably making a considerable amount of noise. Perhaps the first bell has sounded, but they still have time to talk until the final bell. Finally the last bell sounds and the children who have been talking now reluctantly walk to their seats.

Now the procedure is usually for the teacher to stand and say: "Now, children, let us stand for the pledge to the flag." At which the children, one by one, get out of their seats and, after the groaning has subsided and everyone is standing at attention, pledge allegiance to the flag. Then the prayer follows.

That is the way it worked when I was a public school student and that is the way it still works now that I am a high-school teacher. And you may rightfully ask: "Well, what is wrong with it?" Certainly nothing is wrong with it—on the surface.

But if we are honest and look at the children more closely while they are "praying," we would see a number of interesting sights. Some will be mumbling the prayer while leaning on their desks looking over homework. Others will be looking around the room. One or two may be talking. And many of them will be merely mouthing words with no concept whatsoever of their meaning.

That latter fact becomes self-evident once you are familiar with the attitude and behavior of many of these children toward their parents and teachers—these same children who, each day, supposedly pray and

EDITOR'S NOTE

It is often a questionable practice to publish a manuscript that raises doubt on traditional practice. But we recognize the necessity for maintaining an open mind on the almost universal assumptions of a religious and patriotic people. Do not conclude that the author is against prayer. It isn't so! He is discussing the practice of opening a school day by an administrative use of prayer when students may reveal little if any prayerful attitude. The writer is a resident of Utica, New York.

ask God's blessing upon their parents and teachers. To ascertain the accuracy of my thoughts upon this problem, during a senior English class discussion I asked the class to comment on the practice of starting each day with a prayer; the general consensus was that no one, really, is praying at that time.

If these prayers decidedly had a marked beneficial effect on the children, then certainly there would be no questioning their value. But what evidence is there to prove that the required recitation of a prayer to open each school day makes a child a better or happier citizen? Indeed, requiring children to go through the motion of praying each day, *with many knowing in their hearts that they are not really praying*, may actually produce an undesirable attitude in these children—not only toward prayer alone but also toward religion in general if the attitude is expanded through the process of generalization. For most children have been told that prayer is a beautiful, noble, wonderful power to be cherished and respected. But each school day they are required to contain their excitement, stand at attention, recite a prayer, and then sit down again. This, mind you, while many know they are not praying and while many further know, through their keen empathic abilities, *that their teacher knows* they are not praying. In such circumstances, how can they honestly believe that prayer is a beautiful, noble, wonderful power to be cherished and respected?

Moreover, another danger inherent in the practice is that the students may lose a cer-

tain degree of respect for the teacher's integrity since many of the students are aware that the teacher knows they are not really praying yet, regardless, continues to require them to recite the prayer daily. Indeed, in such circumstances, it is quite possible for the teacher to lose his own self-respect.

Proponents for the daily prayer claim that many children might otherwise not come in contact with prayer, but with church attendance now at its highest, the validity of the argument is questionable. Perhaps a more likely explanation for the practice might be a desire on the part of local administrators to be able to say: "We start each school day with a prayer." And if this is the real basic reason underlying these prayers, then we had better take a long and hard look at ourselves and the future of our children. For we may be developing a generation characterized by T. S. Eliot in "The Hollow Men" when he wrote: "Lips that would kiss/Form prayers to broken stone." The lips of our children must not form prayers to broken stone; in no way must their respect and faith in the power of prayer be shattered. But their faith and beliefs *may* be weakened or shattered under the present mechanical practice of starting each school day with a prayer.

If, after careful consideration, we are convinced that the opening prayer has a decided beneficial effect with no detrimental effect whatsoever on our children, then certainly it should be continued. However, should there be the slightest doubt, the practice might better be discontinued.

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Material rewards have a strong appeal to persons working and living in our democratic, capitalistic system. These rewards are regarded by many as one important hallmark of success, and they help to secure others. The opportunity to earn more money stimulates many people to compete and to improve their performance. The hope of recognition for excellence motivates teachers no less than others, including students. Merit pay is one way of providing such challenge. Is this wrong? Should teachers be denied opportunity and challenge because of the profession to which they belong?—STEPHEN ROMINE in the *Colorado School Journal*.

Faculty Leadership in Elections for STUDENT COUNCIL

By ROBERT P. HANRAHAN

IN TODAY'S SECONDARY SCHOOLS there is an increasing emphasis upon quality. This applies not only to the instruction which is offered but also to the other educational experiences available to youth. The leadership and participation of students in both instruction and activities are necessary and important. The student council represents one of these important activities.

Sufficient leadership must of course be exerted by the faculty adviser of a student council for the council to function properly and efficiently. Before it can operate efficiently, a student council must have definite purposes and goals. The adviser has to remind his officers and student council members of these goals and purposes so that the student council will represent the wishes and ideals of the whole student body. A student council cannot truly be called a council of students unless it represents the

whole student body. Many times students feel that they are not truly represented in the council. If students would see to it that capable and competent members are elected, there would be no reservation of opinions about being inadequately represented. It is the responsibility of every student to see that he exercises his prerogative of suffrage. In our democratic form of government, it is the responsibility of the people (the students in this case) to support their elections actively. If incompetent and inefficient students are elected to high council posts, it is mainly due to the negligence and general apathy of the student body. However, the faculty adviser can help prevent such a catastrophe.

There are ways to avoid disinterest on the part of the students. Thornton Township High School, for a number of years, has had a system of voting which both educates and makes the student body more cognizant of the importance of student council elections. Our student council is composed of two bodies: the executive board, or upper house, consists of six officers elected by the student body at large plus four freshmen, four sophomores, five juniors, and five seniors elected by their respective classes; the forum, or lower house, consists of home-room representatives (the number varies with the number of home rooms). The upper house meets with the faculty adviser during home room and the first period every day of the school week in the student council office for a total of 110 minutes a day. However, only three days during the week are devoted to meetings; the remaining two days are used as study halls. It is during this time spent with the executive board mem-

EDITOR'S NOTE

The author is co-ordinator of student activities in Thornridge High School, a brand-new school in the Thornton Township School District, Harvey, Illinois. The development of a working student council is more likely to occur in a newly organized school, provided there is a high quality of professional leadership. If the student council idea is good, how can the council become a working group? What part do elections and preparation for elections play in achieving active council leaders? Of course, there is nothing intrinsically new here, but there is good reinforcement of workable procedures. After all, what really is new in the world?

bers of the student council that the faculty adviser can efficiently plan and organize projects, elections, and activities. Here also the necessary rapport is established between the faculty adviser and the student council members. Without this necessary respect and *esprit de corps*, no student council can run smoothly.

In the lower house or forum, meetings are held at least twice a month in the auditorium since there is a large body of approximately 103 home-room representatives. The presiding officer of this group is the first vice-president of the student council. Communication by these forum members to all the home rooms is extremely important since this large group is the "pulse" of the student body.

Ideas, suggestions, and constructive criticism are encouraged throughout the whole school year. Even so, both the upper house and lower house have the power to nullify each other's decisions in case of controversial topics, recommendations, or projects. The upper house is the policy-making group while the lower house is the sounding board for student opinion.

In the spring of the school year, the primary election for student council officers is held in the 103 home rooms of the school. Before the primary, a pre-election leadership workshop for officer candidates is held in the auditorium during the school day. At this time, audio-visual aids are used to portray student council activities of major student councils throughout the country. In addition, the president of the student council as well as the other officers explain in detail, in small groups, the duties of their respective offices.

All candidates for president meet with the president to learn the president's duties. The other officers follow the same procedure. At the pre-election workshop there is also an explanation of procedures for the primary and final elections.

The officer candidates are placed on the primary ballot as a result of a student's tak-

ing a petition for a student council office. For the final ballot a definite number of candidates (depending on the closeness of the elections) are selected by the senior election board (the president, and any other officer who is a senior, plus five senior board members). The final election is held in voting booths located in the cafeteria and in other strategic areas in the school so that the polls will be accessible to everyone. The voting polls are operated by National Honor Society members as an unbiased election body. In order to prevent someone from voting twice in the election, the N.H.S. members punch the plastic student identification card which every high-school student has.

By balloting at voting booths, the student body as a whole has an obligation to vote. This realistic approach to student council elections stimulates the student body to exercise the privilege of voting, and it prods the office seeker to campaign more enthusiastically at the "grass roots" level. In this manner an officer candidate meets more students and the student body itself has a greater opportunity to meet and to become better acquainted with all the officer candidates as to their experience, desire, character, and other personal qualifications.

The student council election technique is probably the most important point at which a faculty adviser should exert leadership. If the elections are run properly and efficiently, it is probable that a high-caliber student leader will be able to communicate and lead the student body.

Student wishes and ideals will be realized in the student council if an effort is made to create more interest in the student council elections. The key to the morale, spirit, and general deportment of the whole student body lies in these elections. Of course, leadership must come from all quarters but the most important leadership must be exerted by the faculty adviser of the student council. The nature of student leadership hinges upon this key individual.

Parable of Benototle

By HERBERT SMITH

"THERE ARE FEW simple and honest men left in the city," asserted Benototle. "As our state has grown bigger and stronger, we have progressed from the naïve outlook toward the sophisticated. Aristophanes painted a true picture in the beginning of his play. Only the clever and devious men who can scheme and plot will have power in the days to come. I think the actors got this point to their audience, but of course actors are not so good as they were in my day." The others of the group who had attended the production of *Plutus* nodded appreciatively, indicating both assent to Benototle's judgment of the worth of honesty in Athenian politics and concurrence with his opinion of actors.

"I have read that Aristotle spent his life trying to be honest in his investigations. All of his time and much of his wealth went to discovering unimportant things and writing dry books. Had he been clever and sought power and popularity, he might have been a great man in Athens," contributed Hippothenes, whose florid complexion and puffy eyes indicated few hours dedicated to scholarly pursuit.

The gathering of minds in the little wine-shop known as the Symposium was now well into one of their many convivial and critical conversations. It was evident, to them at least, that the small room contained the keenest intelligence and the sharpest wit of

Athens. Only the stimulation of a little wine was needed to produce masterpieces of thought.

"We must remember," said Flato pompously, "that these men lived in simple and easier times. Socrates felt that a man should know his worth and be willing to contribute to the state according to his worth. No one can get anywhere that way today. One has to vaunt himself, make himself invincible before the people today. Because of his simplicity, Socrates lost a great opportunity. Actually much of what he said was sound. Sometimes I think I should like to embellish his work and make it acceptable to the people."

"You men are perceptive," Donacrates broke in, "and of course you are correct. You have forgotten one serious difference, though, between our time and that of Aristotle and Socrates. You must remember that these men lived years ago. Some of our progress is due to their work and we should give them credit. After all, we have now reached a peak of perfection and have learned all there is to learn, or at least most of it. Now we can learn to enjoy our civilized state and make things pleasant for ourselves."

"Yes, indeed," agreed Benototle, straining to get back into the conversation, "even scholarship has changed. The unsophisticated believed that honesty is the essence of scholarship but we know that often a man appears more scholarly, and hence gains the advantage of his learning, if he claims to know more than he knows. It hurts no one....

"Do you remember those poor students who followed Socrates around the city? You may have read of them. All were searching for truth and starving themselves for the

EDITOR'S NOTE

The author is on the staff of Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois. We think that there is a little bit of Jean Paul Sartre's existentialism in this piece. Whether there is or not, you must judge for yourself.

opportunity. Thank the gods that our teachers and students no longer have such ideas. After all, in our advanced civilization which you have described, studying is a social as much as a scholarly pursuit. Our young people are devising clever schemes to answer their teachers' questions. Why should we worry about this? The answers to the questions have already been found and are forever available. Besides the youngsters must have time for their interests beyond their books. The time is past when the scholar has to be rigid and frugal. The teacher no longer has to be harsh and demanding."

"Plato would have our men of gold be scholars and deprive themselves of leisure and luxury for most of their lives," went on Hippothenes. "How foolish that sounds to us now. Surely we intelligent ones deserve the good things in life."

The drinkers had gone and left their empty cups as the only testimony of the evening's labor. "How fitting," thought the keeper of the wineshop, "when they take scholarship from the scholar and integrity from the teacher, that emptiness alone remains. Sad is the fate of any state when the last man thinks as they do."

The Role of Our Schools

Both the junior and senior high schools have their separate places in this scheme of universal secondary education. Stated in simplified terms, the junior high school is the school in which general elements of education are provided for all pupils. The senior high school is the level of increasing specialization and elective choice in education. The junior high school has its special function of exploration and the nurturing of our early adolescents through their most difficult period. In the junior high school years, the schools must further the development of children in the fundamental skills and knowledges and seek as a major function the preparation of pupils for further schooling. In the senior high school years, the pupil must acquire the more specialized skills and knowledges and make major educational and vocational decisions and choices.

In view of these stated functions of different levels, various school systems have sought ways to implement these purposes and goals. So, there are academic programs, vocational and trade programs, technical programs, commercial programs, all in the senior high schools.

American secondary schools are committed to providing for the individual needs, interests, and

abilities of all American youth. Therefore, the educational program for our young people must seek to bring out the best in all of them and avoid policies that breed inferiority or humiliation. This calls for secondary promotion based on guidance principles, on multiple standards and on an understanding of individual needs. Promotion or retention of pupils in grades must be an instrument of our guidance program and not solely the result of pre-set grade standards. What are some of the psychological considerations in the promotion of pupils? Extremely wide physiological, maturational, and psychological differences exist among our 12 to 15 year old pupils. A major consideration in the junior high school is to help pupils to adjust to themselves, to their developing minds and bodies, and to their peers and neighbors. This period of growth is one of explosive change and very wide variation. Research studies indicate that "predicting eventual adult capacity is more difficult in the irregular period of adolescence than in any earlier or later period of growth and maturation." These factors suggest that it is especially important in the early adolescent years to help children who are making little or no progress to retain confidence in themselves.—MAURICE WOLLIN in *Intercom*.

BOOK REVIEWS

School Guidance and Personnel Services
by FRANCIS C. ROSECRANCE and VELMA D. HAYDEN. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1960. 373 pages, \$6.00.

Deans Rosecrance and Hayden have developed their materials on guidance and personnel around four major topics. Significant interrelationships are explained and cross references are numerous. One feels throughout the reading that many years of experience with guidance and personnel services in public education have gone into the selection of ideas and content presented. Administrators, teachers, and advanced college students, as well as those actively engaged in guidance work, will find usable ideas and references.

The first section traces the historical development of the guidance movement, including counseling, health services, vocational guidance, psychological services, social work, and child guidance clinics. Clearly presented throughout this section are the areas of needs as they developed in public schools and the growth of services to care for them.

The second major area covers in detail pupil personnel services as they function in the public schools. Starting with preschool surveys, the authors indicate the function of the different services within the framework of the school and community.

In section three, excellent descriptions of the role and functions of the school psychologist, social worker, and nurse are well presented by professional persons directly involved in these occupations.

The final section on factors affecting the guidance program covers much of the same material as that presented in standard texts on guidance. Examples, tables, and research by the authors strengthen the points presented. Emphasis on key relationships within the school structure along with a liberal use of references increases the utility of this portion of the book. Three workable techniques for evaluating the efforts of the personnel services within a school could be adapted to cover almost any school situation. Finally, a usable appendix and bibliography of some eighty-six pages make the volume desirable for a professional library in addition to its general merit as a text.

ROSS JEAN FLIGOR
Associate Professor of Secondary Education, Southern Illinois University

Education for Effective Thinking by WILLIAM H. BURTON, ROLAND B. KIMBALL, and RICHARD L. WING. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1960. 508 pages, \$6.00.

In this age of automation, rapid communication, and prospects for space travel, an age of accelerated change in all aspects of life and of education, new emphasis must be placed on teaching our citizens how to think. Suggestions for the improvement of education refer time after time to the need for critical thinking, reflective thinking, problem solving, scientific thinking, straight thinking, clear thinking, and the like. Burton, Kimball, and Wing in *Education for Effective Thinking* offer us a sourcebook of facts and suggestions for use at all levels of education in helping our students to learn how to think and how to think better.

This is not intended as a book for use in a course on "How to Think." Rather it is a resource for all who teach anything and who want to make their teaching methods more effective in causing their students to become better thinkers. Someone may say, "Can we teach anyone how to think?" The authors reply and elaborate through twenty-one chapters. "We can aid individuals to improve the natural abilities they possess and the natural processes which they use. We can aid individuals to recognize and be sensitive to certain conventions and processes of valid thought, to certain pitfalls, falacies, and sources of error. Certain general methods can be developed by teachers. We have made an earnest effort in this volume to set forth the outlines of these general methods of teaching."

After consideration in Part I of the nature of reflective thinking—definition, description, and attitudes necessary—the reader is given in Part II a readable and understandable analysis of the "thinking process." This section of the book is highly informative and gives much insight into the early and later writings of the authorities on the "nature of thought" and into research on the subject to date. The references, chapter by chapter, are rich sources for students wanting either factual information or clues for research procedures to use in carrying the quest still further.

Part III, "The Teaching Process and Learning to Think," gives specific and useful suggestions for teachers at all levels of education to use in teaching for thinking through general methods,

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elementary education, language arts, social studies, mathematics, and science. The final chapter gives suggestions for evaluating the critical-thinking skills of students.

DON G. McGAREY
Professor of Education
The Pennsylvania State University

Educational Research for Classroom Teachers by JOHN B. BARNES. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, Inc., 1960. 229 pages, \$4.00.

The fact that Dr. Barnes has designated this book for classroom teachers immediately separates it from numerous other works on educational research. By preparing in an economical style a veritable handbook, he has directly met the objections of those who say that classroom teachers have no time to engage in research. However, there is more than just the "how-to" in this book. General background and analysis of the nature of educational research provide a proper intellectual orientation that efficiently removes esoterism from educational research.

The author's general approach is simple and effective. After briefly discussing historical and contemporary research, he launches into the methods used by teachers in studying (1) individ-

uals, (2) classroom groups and subgroups, and (3) problems of teaching and learning. For each of these three areas of inquiry, he gives illustrative material in the form of case studies which make up a major portion of the book. It is easy to see why. Instead of doing what so many writers do when they exhort beleaguered teachers to expand their duties, Dr. Barnes wishes to *show* rather than just to *tell*. Accordingly the case studies are particularly detailed.

Perhaps more significant than the informative material contained therein is the rationale of the book: Educational research is an integral part of good teaching and not merely an adjunct to it. Dr. Barnes is aware of the difficulties in gaining practical acceptance of this view, for a chapter, "The Study of Teaching and Learning Problems," deals with the inert teacher.

While discussion questions following each chapter suggest the use of the book as a graduate text, the appendixes treating of the administrator's and consultant's roles in research recommend it for in-service programs and professional libraries. It could be valuable in many ways.

FRANCIS A. COLABRESE
Instructor in Secondary Education
Temple University

Books Received

From HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO., 2 Park St., Boston 7, Mass.:

"North Star Books," 1960: *The Birth of Texas* by WILLIAM WEBER JOHNSON, 183 pages; *Captured by the Mohawks* by STERLING NORTH, 183 pages; *Down the Colorado with Major Powell* by JAMES RAMSEY ULLMAN, 184 pages; *The First Northwest Passage* by WALTER O'MEARA, 183 pages; *Lafayette in America* by ANDRÉ MAUROIS, 184 pages; *Robert E. Lee* by JONATHAN DANIELS, 184 pages; *Washington Irving* by ANYA SETON, 184 pages. \$1.68 each.

From PRENTICE-HALL, INC., Englewood Cliffs, N.J.:

Cases and Problems in Economics by JAMES S. DUESENBERRY and LEE E. PRESTON, 1960. 195 pages, \$2.50 (paperbound).

Elementary Musicianship (2d ed.) by ALVIN BAUMAN and CHARLES W. WALTON, 1959. 149 pages, \$3.50.

Essentials of College Chemistry by PAUL R. FREY, 1960. 520 pages, \$6.95.

Readings for Opinion (ad ed.) by EARLE DAVIS and WILLIAM C. HUMMEL, 1960. 552 pages, \$4.95.

Thirty-One Stories edited by MICHAEL R. BOOTH and CLINTON S. BURHANS, JR., 1960. 364 pages, \$3.50 (paperbound).

Word Finder by RUTH I. ANDERSON, LURA LYNN STRAUB, and E. DANA GIBSON, 1960. 244 pages, \$1.44.

Paperbounds Received

From the NEW AMERICAN LIBRARY OF WORLD LITERATURE, INC., 501 Madison Ave., New York 22, N.Y.:

Arms and the Man, Candida, Man and Superman, and Mrs. Warren's Profession by GEORGE BERNARD SHAW, 1960. 447 pages, 50 cents.

The Brothers Karamazov by FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY, 1960. 701 pages, 75 cents.

The Fall of the House of Usher and Other Tales by EDGAR ALLAN POE, 1960. 383 pages, 50 cents.

Folkways by WILLIAM GRAHAM SUMNER, 1960. 605 pages, 75 cents.

Human Heredity by ASHLEY MONTAGU, 1960. 364 pages, 75 cents.

Humphry Clinker by TOBIAS SMOLLETT, 1960. 350 pages, 50 cents.

The Island Civilizations of Polynesia by ROBERT C. SUGGS, 1960. 256 pages, 50 cents.

A Journal of the Plague Year by DANIEL DEFOE, 1960. 240 pages, 50 cents.

Knowledge, Mortality, and Destiny (New Bottles for New Wine) by JULIAN HUXLEY, 1960. 287 pages, 50 cents.

Looking Backward (2000-1887) by EDWARD BEL-LAMY, 1960. 222 pages, 50 cents.

Nostrromo by JOSEPH CONRAD, 1960. 448 pages, 75 cents.

Our Knowledge of the External World by BERTRAND RUSSELL, 1960. 191 pages, 50 cents.

The Ox-Bow Incident by WALTER VAN TILBURG CLARK, 1960. 224 pages, 50 cents.

Walden and On the Duty of Civil Disobedience by HENRY DAVID THOREAU, 1960. 255 pages, 50 cents.

The Way of All Flesh by SAMUEL BUTLER, 1960. 384 pages, 50 cents.

The White Pony: an Anthology of Chinese Poetry edited by ROBERT PAYNE, 1960. 320 pages, 75 cents.

World of the Maya by VICTOR W. VON HAGEN, 1960. 224 pages, 50 cents.

From BANTAM BOOKS, INC., 271 Madison Ave., New York 16, N.Y.:

Anna Karenina by LEO TOLSTOY, 1960. 876 pages, 95 cents.

Anthony Adverse by HERVEY ALLEN, 1960. 1,045 pages, 95 cents.

Arms and the Man by GEORGE BERNARD SHAW, 1960. 120 pages, 35 cents.

The Charterhouse of Parma by STENDAHL, 1960. 432 pages, 75 cents.

From DELL PUBLISHING CO., INC., 750 Third Ave., New York 17, N.Y.:

Blake, selected poetry, 1960. 159 pages, 35 cents.

Emily Dickinson, selected poetry, 1960. 160 pages, 35 cents.

Great French Short Stories selected and introduced by GERMAINE BRÉE, 1960. 317 pages, 50 cents.

Heart of Darkness, Almayer's Folly, and The Lagoon by JOSEPH CONRAD, 1960. 317 pages, 50 cents.

The House of the Seven Gables by NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE, 1960. 318 pages, 50 cents.

Kipling, short stories selected and introduced by EDWARD PARONE, 1960. 317 pages, 50 cents.

A Midsummer Night's Dream by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, 1960. 159 pages, 35 cents.

Much Ado About Nothing by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, 1960. 191 pages, 35 cents.

The Web and the Rock by THOMAS WOLFE, 1960. 736 pages, 95 cents.

THE HUMANITIES TODAY

TV & NEWER MEDIA

The New Humor of Newhart

Whether today's irreverent humorists would have touched off many jocks in the ostensibly peaceful era of twenty-five years ago is very doubtful. Mort Sahl seems quite acerbating for a radio line-up that included "Amos 'n' Andy" and "The Aldrich Family." True, Fred Allen was a noted cynic. But Allen's detached manner made him appear to be an observer of a contemporary scene which he was not actually part of. The New Comedians all seem to be an integral part of the mad cultural pattern which they jest about.

Thus, in this Age of Ephemera, Mort Sahl is beginning to show wear already. Despite infrequent network appearances, his last two routines on the "Ed Sullivan Show" lacked freshness. I found a recent Shelley Berman depiction of a teen-ager on the telephone poignant and not at all funny. In fact, the characters on the Mike Nichols-Elaine May "Improvisations to Music" record reminded me so much of real people that I gave the record away. It was disturbing.

What we have in the latter two instances is a kind of "Comedy Attacks the World" situation in which the real is not distinguishable from the make-believe. Realism becomes reality, and the motley and bells fall away from humor, leaving only naked psyches and facts behind.

One new comedian who has managed to keep a foot firmly planted in humor and prevent overtones of actuality from drowning out his wit is Bob Newhart. In his first record, *The Button-Down Mind of Bob Newhart* (Warner Brothers, W1379), Mr. Newhart manages to direct his satire toward such serious topics as famous men, inventions, and baseball, without losing the light tone.

There are many reasons for Newhart's success in this area. One is that he tempers his serious material with themes, such as Madison Avenue and marketing research, that lend themselves to ridicule. He uses hyperbole well. He has a knack for throwing the brash, palsy-walsy argot associated with Madison Avenue at a dignified "person" at the other end of the telephone line. In addition, there is considerable unity in his skits, so that the listener remains involved in a comic

situation even when individual lines are not meant to be especially funny.

Although there is a great deal of similarity among "Abe Lincoln vs. Madison Avenue," "The Wright Brothers," and "Nobody Will Ever Play Baseball"; and although two consecutive sketches are preoccupied with "johns," there is enough diversity in the six monologues to make the record suitable for many different units.

A few suggestions:

(1) Students doing a unit on heroes or famous Americans could profit from hearing Newhart's treatment of Lincoln and the Wright Brothers. Does our culture tend to demean genuine heroes and glorify those who are less heroic but more attractive superficially?

(2) Those studying humor might note the two skits in which Newhart uses punch lines at the end. Is the final line in the Lincoln monologue an example of sick humor? Which routine most resembles slapstick comedy?

(3) Advertising units can be supplemented by both the Lincoln and Wright Brothers sketches.

(4) The routine on Khrushchev's arrival would fit appropriately into a unit on the study of television.

(5) The comic monologue itself might well be studied in a unit on drama.

One should mention, perhaps, that "hell" occurs twice and "damn" does also. No more than once in any routine, however.

H.B.M.

IN PRINT

Mauve Decade Revisited

Love and Death in the American Novel by LESLIE A. FIEDLER. New York: Criterion Books, Inc., 1959. 603 pages, \$8.50.

In a book that echoes and amplifies many of the ideas so wittily expressed by Thomas Beer in his *The Mauve Decade*, Leslie Fiedler looks carefully at the American author's tendency to avoid the full complications of passion and death and, as a consequence, to lessen the impact of our literature. His study thrusts through a multitude of titles to show the development of trends that culminate in the White Goddess attitude toward women in fiction. Although his treatment of nineteenth-century minor fiction is superb, he does oversimplify some of the major twentieth-century productions. In a

hasty sentence he sweeps aside the total irony of Ernest Hemingway's "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" by stating that Margot Macomber blows off her husband's head because he has estranged her from the guide, Robert Wilson.

His major point, that American authors have side-stepped the major issue of passion, is well developed. Taking his thesis from an ingenious interpretation of Richardson's *Clarissa*, he traces the growth of the themes that most satisfied middle-class feminine illusions, that traveled through the tortured shadows of the gothic genre, and that terminate in the image of Marjorie Morningstar. Mr. Fiedler's passages on the characteristics of the modern gothic are often brilliant, and the fluent clarity with which he has written this enormous study makes its 603 pages seem surprisingly short.

FREDERICK S. KILEY
Trenton State College

Bargain Books

The paperback has made it possible for everyone to become his own librarian. The public school is the place where we teachers will decide how much of the paperback's enormous potential for self-development will be realized. We intend in our roundup of paperbacks, old and new, to tell you how much pleasure and value we have derived from some of these bargain books. Consider this an open forum on paperbacks, where you can exchange opinions on other titles as well as ideas on how to use them in class.

The Search by C. P. SNOW. New York: Signet Books, 1960. 352 pages, 75 cents.

C. P. Snow's level-headed young scientist hero treads on thin ice throughout his scientific career, an affair, and a marriage in this recently revised novel. In an attempt to present a balanced image of the dilemma of the scientific sensibility in our times, the author probes into the intricate motivations of his hero and resolves his findings in a kind of withdrawing virtue of necessity. The hero's honest mistake in research counterpoints a colleague's intentional misuse of facts to establish a reputation. The protagonist's salvation or damnation hinges on whether or not he will reveal his colleague's duplicity.

F.S.K.

Advertisements for Myself by NORMAN MAILER. New York: New American Library (Signet), 1960. 464 pages, 75 cents.

Norman Mailer of *The Naked and the Dead* fame has put together a collection of miscellaneous fragments and protests to give voice to a vision of modern society that would burst the seams of a novel frame. In this collection Mr. Mailer performs a morbid autopsy on his novel, *The Deer Park*. He gropes for a definition of the Beat character and emerges with the image of the White Negro. He examines mass media pornography through advertisements. Throughout the selections an uncertain brilliance characterizes the writing. Sometimes shouting, sometimes snarling, never shy, Mr. Mailer seems in many instances too sure of his role as *enfant terrible*. His defensive presentation of many ideas suggests that he feels that they will not fail to shock. His poems, "Lament of a Lady," and "I Got Two Kids and Another in the Oven," suffer a varicosity from the strain to jolt the reader. Still, the book offers a fascinating insight into the troubled mind of the author who seems determined not to surrender to the values of a society which he labels as sick.

F.S.K.

Stride Toward Freedom: the Montgomery Story by MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. Ballantine Books, Inc., 1960. 184 pages, 50 cents.

The closing gap between hard-cover and paperback publication gives the alert social studies teacher an unusual opportunity to give current focus and depth to the study of American history and culture. For example, the soft-cover edition of a first-person analysis of the Montgomery, Alabama, bus integration movement permits a curious teacher to examine a historic undertaking at close range. The Rev. King's eloquent defense of nonviolent resistance to shame the consciences of oppressors is worth the book by itself. He sees in this method, based on his own wide philosophical reading, the Social Gospel tradition in America, and the Ghandian message, a way of avoiding nuclear holocaust on an international level. A truly significant dimension of this book is the way it relates the Christian concept of the redemptive power of unearned suffering to the colored person's predicament in the modern world. Especially heartening too is the way King demands much more of the Negroes in their search for justice than he asks them to demand of the white. No demagoguery here.

PATRICK D. HAZARD
University of Pennsylvania

From the Critics' Notebook

EDUCATION THROUGH COMMERCIAL TELEVISION (Louis Hausman speaking at a workshop on educational television, Western Michigan University, August 9, 1960): ". . . The alert teacher does keep abreast of what is happening on television, does assign certain programs for home viewing. There are practical difficulties in such a use of television as an educational force. But fundamentally these can be overcome if we recognize certain things about the nature of the television medium. We must be aware of what it can and cannot do. We must understand that the 'literature' of television is nonpermanent, in the sense that it has a dimension in time as the printed word has not. As a result, if one would partake of what television has to offer, one must be selective in what one chooses to view. It may mean rescheduling certain activities in order to be able to take full advantage of those parts of the television schedule in which one is interested.

"In this connection—recognizing that specific information about the content of certain programs would often be useful to teachers, clergy, and other community leaders—the television stations in several cities are now combining resources to publish in their respective communities a joint monthly schedule of educational, cultural, and public-interest programs. These bulletins are being distributed as a service of the television stations in Los Angeles, Chicago, Denver, and San Francisco. Similar bulletins will be published, starting this fall [1960], in St. Louis, Houston, Detroit, Boston, and Norfolk, among others. With information of this kind available at the beginning of each month, teachers are better able to make recommendations for home viewing to their students and are better able to plan their own television viewing. Through such bulletins it is hoped that more people will become more actively aware of some of the outstanding cultural programs to be found on television and that as a result of this awareness more effective demand for more of the best of television will make itself felt. . . ."

GIVEAWAY SHENANIGANS (Harry Harris in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* for August 18, 1960): "If we were asked to name our least favorite show, that would be something of a problem. TV is crammed with programs we consider, to put it politely, reprehensible. But certainly a top contender for the 'honor' would be NBC's six-times-a-week 'The Price Is Right.'

"In our book, it's a peculiar kind of thing to be served up as 'entertainment.' People estimate the value of various articles, and the one who guesses closest to—but not one penny over—the actual price of an item gets to keep it.

"So far, so not-so-good. But it's after the winners are announced that is to us the program's most disagreeable feature. The successful 'bidder' proceeds to show how he feels about getting something for nothing by cackling, arm-waving, uttering ecstatic little shrieks or otherwise cavorting like a candidate for a booby-hatch.

"To us, the whole thing is a glorification of greed, undignified, unwholesome, unwatchable, a sort of 'Queen for a Day' without—except for the losing contestants and any captive members of the audience—suffering.

"Bright, personable Bill Cullen, who hosts the proceedings, doesn't agree. Of course, he's prejudiced, because the program helps keep him in gourmet-style groceries, but dollars and cents aside, he finds the show enjoyable.

"I don't sense any oppressive feeling of greed," he told us during a New York chat. "Perhaps I'm too close to it, but I don't think 'naked greed' (that was OUR phrase) is involved. I'm willing to bet that anybody who interprets it that way would be willing to go on the show and do the same."

"In other words, sour grapes. Well, maybe. . . ."

POEMS FOR TEACHING

I

Mouse's Nest

I found a ball of grass among the hay
And prodded it as I passed and went away;
And when I looked I fancied something stirred,
And turned agen and hoped to catch the bird—
When out an old mouse bolted in the wheats
With all her young ones hanging at her teats;
She looked so odd and so grotesque to me,
I ran and wondered what the thing could be,
And pushed the knapweed bunches where I
stood;

Then the mouse hurried from the creaking
brood.

The young ones squeaked, and as I went away
She found her nest again among the hay.
The water o'er the pebbles scarce could run
And broad old cesspools glittered in the sun.

—JOHN CLARE

II

A Description of the Morning

Now hardly here and there a hackney-coach
 Appearing, show'd the ruddy morn's approach.
 Now Betty from her master's bed had flown,
 And softly stole to discompose her own;
 The slip-shod 'prentice from his master's door
 Had par'd the dirt, and sprinkled round the
 floor.
 Now Moll had whirl'd her mop with dext'rous
 airs,
 Prepar'd to scrub the entry and the stairs.
 The youth with broomy stumps began to trace
 The kennel-edge where wheels had worn the
 place.
 The small-coal man was heard with cadence
 deep,
 Till drown'd in shriller notes of chimney-sweep:
 Duns at his lordship's gate began to meet;
 And brick-dust Moll had screamed thro' half a
 street.
 The turn-key now his flock returning sees,
 Duly let out a-nights to steal for fees:
 The watchful bailiffs take their silent stands;
 And schoolboys lag with satchels in their hands.

—JONATHAN SWIFT

These two poems are, on the surface, extremely simple. Simplicity is a quality which does not guarantee artistic merit, but it is a truism that the genuine artist often manages to combine simplicity with grandeur and/or universality so that we know that this is "the real thing." Almost all painters, for example, at some time in their careers, try their hands at a still life: a vase of chrysanthemums or zinnias, or a couple of pears, a bunch of grapes, and a pewter pitcher, and the great painters give these commonplace objects a charm, freshness, and organization which makes them unfailingly pleasing. The slick aesthetician can tell you what the essential artistic ingredient is, and more power to him, but most of us react with an involuntary and inarticulate pleasure.

Though the foregoing poems do not belong in the category of "still life," they are in a sense paintings, and simple in their subject matter. They also are both "statements"—almost devoid of figurative language. What gives them distinction is that they are just as imaginatively stimulating as many more complicated poems.

I

John Clare was a country poet who obviously derived some of his inspiration from rustic sights and sounds and voiced it in an unsophisticated way. In these seven couplets he has described almost literally an episode which might

occur in the life of any of us. Of course, we would pass it by, and it is very unlikely that we would record it in rhyming couplets, or in any other way. If we did, we would probably not make it so vivid. Can we find the secret of his evocativeness?

Evidently the poet was startled when he accidentally "prodded" the ball of grass. Even in his surprise he was sharp enough to observe the mother mouse carefully. He saw, for example, that she was a veteran mother. She was old, grotesque, but she was carrying on the important business of motherhood. This has a deep appeal—all of us, mice and men, are for mother. Fortunately, she ran into a poet, and she was permitted to resume her sacred duties. The upshot of the poem, or of the incident, was that the aged mother mouse went back to her nest, and we assume that the squeaking little ones went back too.

The last two lines are the clinchers, so to speak, which make Clare a poet rather than a plain reporter. While they seem to bear no strict relation to the first twelve lines, they testify to the imaginatively comprehensive eye. We are turned sharply away from the trifling, domestic, near mouse-tragedy to the state of nature in the large. There is a need of rain, and the sun glitters on, of all things, cesspools. Cesspools are not nice things—they suggest infection and decay. In this stagnant world, the eternal life cycle carries on. Clare has organized his literal picture in a fresh way. It is a fine poem.

II

Jonathan Swift has little fame as a poet, though he wrote enough poems to fill a respectable volume. This brilliantly economical picture seems merely to set down a list of details about a morning in a large city. But first it makes us feel that we are there. This apparently matter-of-fact reporting is a vivid sociological report on a whole urban civilization, magnificently pictorial and atmospheric. The details are chosen with an artist's hand: a few early cabbies, the wanton housemaid, the sloppy 'prentice, the equally inefficient Moll who knows how to wave a mop without doing much cleaning, the small coal-hawker desperately trying to dig up early business, the childish voice of the chimney sweep, the debt collector or process server out to catch the upperclass debtor before he has a chance to vanish for the day, the jailer locking up his flock of prisoners whom he has let out at night to steal the bribes on which he (the jailer) must live, the reluctant schoolboy. We would be clods if we could not see it all. It is not a pretty picture, and one thinks by way of

contrast of Wordsworth's picture of London from Westminster Bridge at daybreak. For Wordsworth "Earth has not anything to show more fair" and he never felt a calm so deep. Since "all that mighty heart is lying still," it is only right to assume that Wordsworth was up earlier than Swift and human folly and energy had not yet begun to exercise its misdirection. Both poems are "true"; Wordsworth's more famous perhaps because it is the more agreeable.

The excellence of Swift's couplets lies, I believe, in the tight suggestiveness and authenticity of these few lines. Of course, with his satiric eye, he has stressed the seamy side. Wordsworth did not like London when it was awake and busy. Swift, at least, has given us the real thing.

WILLIAM ROSS CLARK
University of Connecticut

SCREENINGS

Inherit the Wind

The summer of 1925 was an unusually hot summer, marked by events which were attributed by some wits to the excessive heat. The Rockaways in New York, the beaches of Miami, Florida, and the little town of Dayton, Tennessee, were beset with what appeared to be utterly fantastic happenings. Wild land-boom sales literally rocked the populace in the Rockaways and Miami, and the "monkey trial" gave Dayton, Tennessee, a momentary place in the sun. The latter event is the historic subject of a swiftly moving, interesting film, which creates a mythical Hillsboro as the focus of attention. The story relates the trial and tribulations of a science teacher, John Thomas Scopes, for having taught Darwin's theory of evolution. This re-creation of the bizarre trial, in a carnival spirit in which an intelligent orangutan plays a brief role, is a fascinating, if fantastically entertaining, spectacle of what can happen in parts of our great land.

Tennessee's law forbidding the teaching of evolution involves Bertram Cates (Scopes), played by Dick York, in a test case instigated by the Rev. Brown, the blood-and-thunder preacher fundamentalist of the Dayton community. Claude Akins, well-known bad man of TV Westerns, plays the role of the preacher as convincingly as does Burt Lancaster in *Elmer Gantry*—but the Rev. Brown believes what he fervently exhorts.

Spencer Tracy as Henry Drummond (Clarence Darrow, in reality) and Fredric March as Matthew Harrison Brady (William Jennings Bryan, thrice defeated Democratic candidate for the presidency) give exciting performances, although the latter resembles a caricature of the original. Their vocal duels in the courtroom are unorthodox and permissible before a politically inspired judge. The climax of the play is a hilarious performance by both attorneys in which Drummond pulls Brady to the stand as an expert on the Bible and debunks the fundamentalist champion's comments that all the lines in the Bible must be interpreted literally. He finally traps Brady into an admission that only Brady's interpretation is correct.

As the trial comes to an end, the judge, played by Harry Morgan—also of TV and film fame—imposes a token fine of \$100 on Gates. Brady protests but he has lost the crowd. In the midst of a prepared speech, to which nobody listens, he suffers a heart attack and dies.

The underlying theme is the "right to think" and the "right to be wrong"—among the freedoms of men.

Incidentally, Mr. Scopes is currently a prosperous geologist, having been forced to relinquish his teaching career thirty-five years ago.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(1) The court conflict was between the fundamentalists and the self-styled agnostic, Henry Drummond. (a) What is a fundamentalist? Name a fundamentalist of the present day. (b) What is an agnostic? (c) Why should they differ on the subject of evolution?

(2) Why did the judge and the townspeople oppose the testimony of prominent scientists?

(3) Brady often interrupts Drummond during the trial without permission of the judge, without even the courtesy of an "objection!" What would you do, if you were the judge in this court?

(4) Although we are aware of the prejudices of the townspeople, why does the atmosphere and attitude toward Brady change suddenly? Justify your response.

(5) Why does Drummond berate the cynical Hornbeck after the death of Brady, although Hornbeck has co-operated with him throughout the trial?

(6) Appraise the actors in the play: Tracy, March, Kelly, Akins, Morgan, York, and Mrs. Brady, who in real life is Mrs. Fredric March (Florence Eldridge).

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AUDIO-VISUAL NEWS

Audio-Visual Research

Research in audio-visual communication plays an important part in laying the proper foundations for recommendations to teachers for improving their class instruction. The most recent research was done at the Pennsylvania State University under a United States Government contract. As a result of this work, Dr. Lorin Twyford, now consultant on educational communications for the New York State Education Department, summarized and edited two volumes: *Instructional Film Research Reports*, Volumes I and II, Navexos P-1220 and P-1543, United States Naval Training Device Center, Port Washington, New York. In addition William E. Allen has summarized research in his article, "Audio Visual Communication" in the *Encyclopedia of Educational Research* (Macmillan Co., 1960), pp. 115-137. From these sources the following principles have been found.

FACTUAL FILMS

1. Films alone can be used to teach factual information over a wide range of subjects and grade levels. 2. Films are at least as effective as other comparable means of instruction for factual information. 3. Films can be used to teach foreign vocabulary. 4. Specific content in films is required to meet specific instructional objectives. Films with broad superficial content aimed at a generalized audience are likely to be less effective than films with well-specified content aimed at an audience of known characteristics. 5. Films should be prepared for a specific audience.

MOTOR SKILLS

1. Motor skills that are at least as complex as operating a sound-motion-picture projector or performing gymnastic skills can be taught by means of films alone. 2. An instructor can increase his effectiveness by using film loops to teach a skill to groups while he devotes his time to coaching individuals. 3. Handwriting performance and position may be taught by films.

CONCEPTS

1. Concepts taught by films are retained longer than conventional teaching. 2. Suitable films can be used to improve personal adjustment.

MOTIVATION, INTERESTS, ATTITUDES, AND OPINIONS

1. Motivation and interests may be increased under certain conditions. 2. Attitudes and opinions are very hard to change but may be changed at times, especially if more than one film is used. Care must be taken that the attempt to do this does not backfire and have the opposite effect.

HOW TO INCREASE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF FILMS

1. Use films to teach. Films are likely to be more effective if they are integrated into the curriculum and related to carefully formulated instructional objectives. 2. Films that are perceived by students to contain useful material will provide the greatest amount of learning. 3. When films are used as fill-in, or for entertainment or if the content does not appear to the student to be pertinent to the course being studied, there is likely to be less learning than otherwise. 4. Pretesting increases the amount of learning. 5. Introducing the film and stating the purpose and importance of the showing increase the amount of learning. 6. Post-testing with knowledge of results increases learning. 7. Showing the films two times (but no more) greatly increases the learning. 8. Students will learn more if printed study guides are used before and after film showing. 9. Note taking should not be encouraged during the first showing because it interferes with attention and hence with learning. 10. Students can partially learn to do a skill by watching a film and imagining that they are performing the skill and by going through the skill "mentally" even though they do not have the equipment available. 11. Evaluate film showings. Do not assume that learning has occurred as a result of showing a film. Evaluate the effect of a film by giving a test.

INSTRUCTIONS THAT SHOULD BE GIVEN TO STUDENTS

1. Discover the instructional purpose.
2. Watch for outlines or titles.
3. Concentrate on the sound-track commentary.
4. Mentally practice.
5. Take notes on second showing.

FILMSTRIPS AND SLIDES

1. Filmstrips and slides are equal or superior to movies for teaching where motion or continuity is not the important skill.
2. Declarative and imperative captions are superior to interrogative.
3. Third dimension is of no effect in the learning of factual information but is of great effect in the interpreting of size and form in space.

FLAT PICTURES

1. There is very little research on the effectiveness of flat pictures. Some evidence says that flat pictures increase learning. Other evidence says the opposite.

GRAPHIC MATERIALS

1. Few conclusions have been made from research on graphs. Simple visual patterns with scant data tend to produce more specific recall. A circle graph is probably the best way to represent parts of a whole.

TELEVISION

1. Teaching by television is effective at all levels of instruction from elementary school to military training. In very few cases has TV instruction been found to be inferior to conventional instruction, and in many cases TV was significantly more effective.
2. Most high-school teachers who have used TV teaching techniques are highly in favor of them.
3. Kinescopes have been found equivalent to live TV and conventional films from a teaching point of view.

RADIO AND RECORDINGS

1. Research on radio and recordings is scarce and somewhat inconclusive.
2. In general, they were found at least as effective as conventional teaching materials in imparting factual information.
3. They are not of much value in changing attitudes.

FIELD TRIPS

1. Field trips are one of the most effective methods of instruction, especially if they are combined with other A-V materials.

3-D MODELS

1. Third dimensional models have been found to be of use in some specific positions. In most situations their extra cost is not justified in terms of increased learning.

Publications

"Look, Listen and Learn," 24 pages, \$2.00 per hundred; Coronet Films, Coronet Bldg., Chicago 1, Ill. Pointers for teachers and students on how to get the most out of educational films.

"100 Selected Films in Economic Education," 34 pages, 75 cents each; Joint Council on Economic Education, 2 W. 46th St., New York 36, N.Y. A study guide to 100 films including areas of use, synopsis, questions raised by the film, and suggested activities. Producer, length, and grade level are given. Prices for film not quoted.

New Films

AMERICAN MAKER: color, 25 mins., free loan, Jam Handy Organization, Film Distribution Dept., 2821 E. Grand Blvd., Detroit 11, Mich. American genius at work in production that has made America great.

BLACK WIDOW SPIDER: color, 12 mins., \$1.20, Ken Middleham Productions, P.O. Box 1065, Riverside, Calif. Shows two complete life cycles, that of the spider and a fly. The praying mantis and the alligator lizard are also shown as enemies.

CITRUS, THE GOLDEN FRUIT: color, 15 mins.; accompanying filmstrip, **THE GOLDEN GROVES**, color; \$79.50 complete, Haeseler Pictures, 1737 N. Whitney Ave., Hollywood 28, Calif. Also study guides, 50 copies \$3.00, from Sunkist Growers, Consumer Service Division 1100, 707 W. 5th St., Los Angeles 17, Calif. An interesting picture showing the planting, cultivating, and harvesting of the citrus crop.

FIFTY MILES FROM POONA: 20 mins., black and white, \$90, National Film Board of Canada, 680 Fifth Ave., New York 19, N.Y. Most of India's 400 million people live in small villages. From the day-to-day life of one family, the film reveals much of traditional Hindu customs and beliefs. Teachers will like the detailed views of farming, food preparation, dress, and customs.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT: 11 mins., black and white, \$45, All American Productions, P.O. Box 801, Riverside, Calif. A volleyball training film. Fundamentals in drills are demonstrated by seven USVBA all-American volleyball players in regular speed and slow motion.

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